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HESPERIA.



THEME.

ASTRÆA, the Genius of Liberty and Justice, seeks a dwelling-place upon the earth. Persecuted and driven from land to land, she follows the evening star and finds at last a beautiful kingdom in the western world ; this becomes her home and the birthplace of her beloved daughter Hesperia.

Eroton, the Genius of Love and Fidelity, the husband of Astræa and father to Hesperia, after many wanderings in search, at last joins the objects of his love and care. Reunited, they preside over this new land and seek to preserve it for their child's inheritance. They are recognized and cherished by a small band of devoted followers, who summon them to their councils in the city of Fraternia.

At first Liberty and Love prevail, but Astræa discovers the presence of a serpent who breathes on her a subtle poison, and she (with Eroton) is slain.

Llamia, the serpent of policy, then controls and takes in charge the beautiful child Hesperia ; seeking to unite her in marriage to her foul son Slavery — who must be nameless evermore ; but Hesperia

is warned by the Genius of Nature, Calios, who, in the guise of a poet and magician, holds sway even over Llamia. When Hesperia beholds him she recognizes her soul's counterpart, and is prepared, by his words and love, to resist all the evil machinations of Llamia and her son.

Llamia, however, holds temporary power over the form of Hesperia, and succeeds in throwing a spell around the maiden which she vainly imagines will prove fatal; the love of her parents and of Calios rouses her spirit, and with them she withdraws into the world of souls, where, for a time, she beholds the scenes enacted under the influence of Llamia. She witnesses in Athenia and Crescentia deeds of horror and the tortures inflicted upon the oppressed. Calios sings to her in plaintive songs of these down-trodden ones, lures her by the voices of nature, and in interludes of Love and Truth seeks to win her back to her earthly kingdom.

Long years does Llamia hold sway and at last wakens the voice of war; when Astræa, not dead, but only withdrawn for a space, turns the sword of Llamia upon her son.

Through long suffering is Hesperia made strong and pure. She listens to the voice of Nature's children and their tortures cease; slavery and war are known no more. Astræa and Erotion are again the attendant and abiding souls of this fair land; they witness with rapture and benedictions the union of Calios and Hesperia, who rule with undivided sway over the most lovely Empire of the Earth.

c. 2205 B'

HESPERIA.

BY

CORA L. V. TAPPAN.

1871.

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INDUCTION.

I.

ON a high rock, o'erhanging the sad sea,
Round which the wild waves dash unceasingly,
Tossing their tempest arms tumultuously,

II.

I saw a wondrous woman fearless stand,
Turning her weary face from the drear strand,
Stretching toward the sea her snowy hand.

III.

Her silver locks around her feet did flow,
The blossom of a strange, unearthly woe,
Meeting the white bloom of the spray below.

IV.

No touch of treacherous time was there, nor trace
Of dull decay, to mar her perfect grace,
But a strange pallor dwelt upon her face.

V.

And O, 'twere joy to look into those eyes,
Half filled with tears, like dews of paradise,
And lighted with the fires of prophecies.

VI.

Long stood she musing thus, as if to gaze
Through the low weary mists and darkened maze
Of ages past and unforgotten days.

VII.

She seemed as one awakened from sleep,
But not as oft before to watch and weep ;
Her fair form now a burden sweet did keep.

VIII.

O, mouth of many mighty melodies !
She spoke, and richest, sweetest symphonies
Filled all the vibrant air with harmonies.

IX.

Old Neptune, raptured by the magic tone
Of that sweet voice, ceased for a while to moan ;
Sabrina, too, heard music like her own.

X.

“Closed are yon gates of porphyry and gold ;
For me the Orient no charms can hold,
The clouds of amethyst no more enfold

XI.

“The young world’s Eden : desolate decay
Sits at the gates of morn and e’er doth prey
Upon the nations till they pass away.

XII.

“The Crescent, like a deadly serpent, holds
Earth’s first-born nations in its fiery folds ;
And rank corruption hides them ’neath its moulds.

XIII.

“Closed, closed on this side darkest to my sight,
The other holds, perchance, some ray of light,
For Jove can fashion light from deepest night.

XIV.

“Ye fairest twain, my first and latest born,
Cradled and nursed in splendors of the morn,
E’en now your beauty doth my life adorn ;

xv.¹

“When from your gemmed isles, fair Greece, I flew,
And o’er the Adriatic waste withdrew
To where the Tiber pours its deadly dew,

¹ The xvth and xvith stanzas were suggested by the following lines : —

“When Liberty from Greece withdrew,
And o’er the Adriatic flew
To where the Tiber pours his urn,
She struck the rude Tarpeian Rock ;
Sparks were kindled by the shock —
Again thy fires began to burn.”

XVI.

“My feet were torn on the Tarpeian Rock,
And Freedom’s fires were kindled by the shock ;
But Death his dreadful doors on thee did lock :

XVII.

“And thou, fair daughter of the earth and sea,
Holding all sacred things ’twixt heaven and me,—
Thou nearest and thou dearest Italy!

XVIII.

“I cradled thee amid those amber seas,
Till thou wert bright as heaven’s Pleiades,
Nor saw beyond the gates of Hercules

XIX.

“That I must pass, deserted and alone,
From land to land, from weary zone to zone,
A childless mother ; yet I will not moan.

XX.

“Closed are the sapphire oceans, where arose
Pale Arethusa from her bed of snows,
Her white lips silent with unspoken woes.

XXI.

“Those Hyperborean wastes no power can move,
They hold the secrets of Great Nature’s love,
Which she in silent power must ever prove.

XXII.

"Europe shall feel my breath, erewhile she hates
And loathes me and my children, but she waits
Until slow tyranny unlock the gates.

XXIII.

"Let Cross and Crescent bar the doors of pearl,
Let em'rald waters all their wild waves hurl,
Hope doth her banner brightly now unfurl."

XXIV.

From the rich splendors of the purple east,
And from the power of Gorgon-headed beast,
Alluring nations to its upas feast,

XXV.

Freedom now turned ; her face had paler grown,
As though her sorrows were not all her own,
And her deep voice bore a prophetic tone.

XXVI.

Her hand now swept toward the glowing west
In one grand gesture full of deep unrest,
Kindling a sudden flame on nature's breast ;

XXVII.

From the broad belt of beauteous land that lies
Between the southern cross and northern skies,
She chose the fairest for her paradise.

XXVIII.

From sea to sea she cast her shivering glance,
In one full gleam of a prophetic trance,
Which probed the future like a lightning lance :

XXIX.

Sandaled with plumes of thought, her spirit sent
Its living form across the continent, —
A thousand leagues, on its great purpose bent.

XXX.

She touched an ocean with each loving hand,
And deftly wrought, with her own wondrous wand,
Rich robes, for the new princess of the land :

XXXI.

White robes from clouds, and mountain mists, and sheen
Of silver waters ; vestments of bright green
'Broidered with flowers, from hills and vales between ;

XXXII.

Rich em'rald robes reaching to either sea,
Fold after fold flowing wonderfully,
Beaded with spray and foam-like tracery ;

XXXIII.

Slippers, fitted for smallest, fairest feet,
Enwrought with island gems, more fair and sweet
Than all the isles where eastern waters meet ;

XXXIV.

Bracelets and bands of silver mountain streams,
Whose diamond sources flashed the many beams
Of day, brighter than opalescent gleams ;

XXXV.

Broad river girdles, bodices of flame,
Widening to lakes, each one a living name
Of wonder, which no other land can claim ;

XXXVI.

All fragrant with perfumes of starry flowers,
Distilled by Flora and her maids, the Hours,
Making sweet music with their winged powers ;

XXXVII.

A crown, from shining shafts of mountain heights,
Whose diamond sword-points cleave the darkest nights,
And mock the starry hosts with their clear lights ;

XXXVIII.

Reflecting all hues, holding only one, —
The threefold light of Heaven's perfect sun,
Revealéd in the whiteness of His Son.

XXXIX.

Then through the red and white of sunset dyes,
A chasm of starry blue inspired her eyes,
And glory, like God's smile, adorned the skies.

XL.

Urania found her as she proudly stood
Expectant, for her matchless motherhood
Saw all her work, and smiled that it was good.

XLI.

Then, from the womb of Freedom's weary night
There burst a sudden dawn, as clear and bright
As on that morn when God first called the light.

XLII.

As sprang Minerva from the brow of Jove,
Most potent among mighty minds that move,
Hesperia was born, the Child of Love.

BOOK I.
ASTRÆA.



DEDICATED TO MY MOTHER.



PRELUDE.

I.

VAIN, vain, the painter's skill
To picture nature's grace, —
The daisy meadow holds
A hue no art can boast ;
The Iris arch uprears
Its matchless, crescent dome ;
The mountain glacier gleams
Near the cerulean sky,
Which, flecked with fleecy clouds,
Changes but cannot die.
In autumn sunset glow
All gorgeous colors blend,
As though a million gems
Had molten fire become,
Splashing the trees with flame
And kindling to the sky ;
The insect's tiny wing
Of opalescent light,
Transcends all touch of art ;
And every living thing,
Between the day and night
Of God's great mind and earth,
Reveals His Master Hand.
Correggio's rare gift,

Those peerless forms to trace
On shores of shining sand,
Where shells of tinted rose
And crystal waters gleam,
Reflecting beauty's grace ;
Or Raphael's high thought,
Like an inspired dream
Of Heaven, ensphered in love,
In which Christ's mother shone
In every lovely face,
And every cherub boy
Was but a budding thought
Of Him named Deity ;
Or Rembrandt's deeper shade
Of coloring intense,
In which each passion glowed,
As though the thought itself
Had burst the bonds of sense,
And was absorbed in hue
And deepest, darkest tints,
Till it embodied came,
And was a thing of life.
Yet all in vain, for these
Are but the cast-off robes,
While the true Artist's soul
Is ever clothed anew,
Even as nature casts
Her bright apparel down
Robing herself in light.

II.

Vainly the sculptor stands
 With ready lifted glaive,
 And chisel fine as thread
 Of maiden's silken tress.
 A shape, indeed, of grace
 Appears beneath his hand,
 But ah! no life is there, —
 The polished face is cold,
 The rounded form is dead;
 Not all the art of earth
 Can breathe incarnate fire
 Through kindling arteries,
 Or nerves of thrilling light.
 Motion is art: whoe'er
 Has made a moving form, —
 Be it a white winged sail,
 A horse with fiery breath,
 A million arms of power
 Uplifting those who toil,
 Or mounting, cleaves the air
 With wond'rous globes of space, —
 He is indeed a god.
 But chiseled statues stand
 The emblems of a thought
 Which has grown old and gray,
 And which the hand of time
 Plucks from its pedestal
 And proudly flings away.
 While motion ever holds
 The living infant's form,

And one babe at the breast
Drinking its fill of life,
With moving dimpled limbs,
Is better than all shapes
Of sculptor's finest art.

III.

Vain is high Poesy :
The greatest thoughts have wings ;
Before we catch our breath
To sing our highest song,
Our bird is out of sight ;
We pluck a falling plume,
We stand upon the shore,
The sea-song rolls afar ;
A drop of silver spray
Touches our burning lips,
We drink who are athirst,
And call that drop our song.
Imagination lends
Her silver sandaled plumes,
We mount amid the stars
Striving to crown our brows
With their bright diadems, —
A meteoric light
Is all we bring to earth ;
Heaven never gave its stars, —
Only their broken beams.
The Hebraic bards sublime
Chanted their hymns of praise
In deeds and words of love,
Or worship unto God,

And only left their torn
 And tattered shreds of thought
 For us to gather up
 And call the Word of God.
 In vain great Homer's lay,
 Save to perpetuate
 The errors and the crimes
 Of rankest unbelief, —
 Unless indeed we draw
 Aside the charméd veil,
 And read, as Homer did,
 Nature, and feel her soul.
 In vain the Prophet Bards
 Have sung their silver songs ;
 The sound has died away,
 But fragments of the fire
 That kindled on their lips
 And burned their life away,
 Alone are left for those
 Who touch, like them, the heights
 Of that eternal mount,
 Where poesy becomes
 A form of living Truth.

IV.

Vain, vain, the master mind
 Fashioned St. Peter's dome,
 The builder's coarser brain
 No perfect plan could hold.
 O, Angelo, thy thought
 To blend the bending sky
 With the cloud curtained earth

Was lost in thy own mind ;
Or it perchance became
The temple of that sphere
Wherein thy perfect soul
Hath now its blest abode.
Egypt's proud pyramids
May pierce the Orient ;
Those towers, domes, and spires
Are bathed in morning light ;
Colossal monuments
Of the first years of time,
Ruins of cities vast
Reared in the world's young prime
And consecrate to Art,
And to Religion kind.
O, Rome, with all thy spires,
Thy shafts and obelisks,
Thy pillars and thy dim
And dark cathedral aisles,
Thy sacred works and words,
Thy crowning splendors all, —
Vain are thy treasured walls ;
The blue Italian sky
Bends in one living dome
Encircling, star enwrought,
Upheld by pictured hills,
And pillared with the clouds
That rest on sea and shore.
Yes, vain, for Alpine heights
Still kindle in the morn,
And Chimborazo's peak
Pierces with shaft of flame

The vaulted chasm of air ;
The Andes lift their brows
Against the hand of God,
And all the world is held
By matchless masonry.

, v.

Vain, vain is music's breath,
Though reaching up to heaven ;
A thousand warblers wake
The wild woods with their notes,
And from a myriad throats
Scatter their melody :
The skylark is not dead,
The nightingale still sings
Her lonely love lament
Through the long summer nights ;
(The anthems of the sea still sound exultingly.)

In vain the master minds
Of harmony have poured
Their music o'er the world ;
The weird winds still weave
Their wondrous minstrelsy :
Shivering silver sighs
From trembling aspen leaves ;
Broad peans from the pines, —
The matchless murm'ring pines,
The writhing, wailing pines,
The sighing, sobbing pines,
The music haunted pines, —
And weeping willow boughs ;

O, forest harps, we weep
For melody like yours ;
(The anthems of the sea still sound exultingly.)

Vain, Mozart, was thy tone,
Like a clear voice from Heaven ;
Whose grand interpreter
Thou wert, and who hast given,
In syllables of fire
Vibrating from thy soul,
Nature's high symphonies, —
In vain, unless we too
Float in that atmosphere
Where thou didst ever move,
Thou music-wingéd dove ;
(The anthems of the sea still sound exultingly.)

And ye twin brothers rare
Of sacred harmonies, —
Handel with all thy power
Of perfect melody,
Haydn with thy deep breath
Of Heaven inspiring song :
But chiefly thou whose tones
Are like the sea of soul
Washing against the shores
Of time, thou, Beethoven ;
(The anthems of the sea still sound exultingly.)

And ye bright stars of song,
Baptized and bathed in light
From the clear atmosphere

Of Italy's dark night,
Who sung with cross of fire
Suspended to each breast,
Yet war could never quench
Your melody's unrest ;

(The anthems of the sea still sound exultingly.)

Vain, vain the instruments,
And all the songs of time,
O choirs invisible, —
Orchestras all unseen ;
O, harps with golden strings,
Hung on all places high ;
O, pipings of sweet Pan ;
Apollo's charmed lyre ;
O mighty minstrelsies,
O vocal vibrations,
O voiceless harmonies ;
Oratorios grand ;
O sacred symphonies ;

(The anthems of the sea still sound exultingly.)

VI.

No, no, not all in vain :
One perfect form of art,
Though never typified,
Becomes a living form,
Which through eternity
Endures and shall not fade.
Those high, immortal minds, —
Masters of harmony,
Masters of poesy,

Masters of line and form,
Masters of masonry, —
Each clasp their hands with all,
And climb the threefold height
Of that art pyramid
That reaches up to heaven.
They touch the hand of Him
Who reared the Royal arch,
And placed the Corner-stone,
And carved the pillars vast,
And painted all the forms
Of life with coloring,
And fashioned every shape
Of beauty, filling all
The void interstices
Of chaos and of space
With the rare beauty bright,
With grandeur all supreme ;
And rounded the vast dome,
And kindled all the worlds,
And lighted with His breath
The central suns of space,
Until each atom grew
Unto a perfect form,
And every sun became
A portion of that Light
Which is the Universe !
So every thought of ours
Unfolds like a sweet rose
Blooming eternally
Upon the breast of God.
So every perfect thought

Enfolds us like a robe,
 Becomes a part of all
 That we ourselves become,
 And paves the starry way
 To our eternal home.
 Like water-lilies white,
 Or sacred lotus flowers,
 Uplifting their rare forms
 From low and dismal pools,
 We lift our brows to God
 From the low marsh of time,
 And the dark waves of life
 With lilies of white thoughts
 Are crowned and glorified:
 And every sun and world,
 Responsive to our life,
 Becomes the sweet abode
 Of our immortal souls.
 The stars, like stepping-stones
 To travellers' weary feet,
 Or like the emerald branch
 To weary white-winged doves,
 Are but the oases
 Of the soul in its flight,
 While each augmented life
 Brings us forever near
 And nearer unto God.

VII.

Nature and art are one,
 Even as truth is one,
 Even as light is one,

As God and Christ are one,
As souls are one with God ;
Art breaks for us the sphere
Within which lies concealed
Nature's mysterious charm.
The many forms of thought,
Religions, faiths, beliefs,
Are but the grains of sand
Broken from truth's great rock ;
As the pure light of heaven
Is broken to our gaze
Through the cathedral dome,
Or through the sparkling prism,
Or through the bended bow,
Presenting many hues,
But holding only one, —
Vibration of pure light,
Seen as His love is white.
Matter reveals God's form,
As truth reveals His soul ;
All forms are Christs indeed,
All truths are saviors sweet ;
We are but smaller spheres
Of which God is the whole.
Perfection owns no law,
But is itself all law, —
The cycle of that sphere
With which great nature rules —
Eternal Infinite.

PART I.



ASTRÆA.



ASTRÆA.

I.

A WEARY woman, bending 'neath the weight
Of a sweet burden, outcast and alone,
With robes of faded splendor closely drawn
Around her breast, in tender protection
Of something dearer far than her own life,
Wandered, unsheltered, through the pathless wilds ;
Her plenteous hair wound like a silver crown
Around a lofty brow, whose snow was traced
With pencilings of care and deepest thought ;
Her face, more eloquent than blushing youth,
Lighted with liquid fires that ever gleamed
From the rare splendor of her glorious eyes.
For many weary leagues 'she journeyed on
Among the children of the forest wild,
With footsteps free, receiving at their hands
Such kindness as their humble fare could give,
Smiling her thankfulness with such sweet grace,
They thought the image of a guest divine
Had veiled itself in her fair human form,
And come to bless them with some precious boon.
They called her by the names which spirits have,
And when she left them sought some simple gift, —

A piece of her torn mantle, or a lock
Of the long hair that crowned her regally.
In the deep wilderness, far from the sea
And all its deep-toned, haunting memories,
Its murmurings, its sobbing of unrest,
On the mild slope of a high mountain range,
Above the tempest breeding plain, sheltered
From the harsh winds by brooding forest trees,
She chose her home ; within a rocky cave
Open to the warm sunlight, where the walls
Seemed fashioned by some human hand, and floors
O'ergrown with softest mosses — faded leaves
Of flowing ivy and wild grapevine clung
To the gray walls, where interlacing arms
Of climbing parasites flung out their starry bloom
Over an arch of wondrous masonry ;
While far above the rocky dome was cleft
Into a pyramidal, shaft-like tower
On which the eagle's eyrie had been built
For many years, and these proud birds swept down
In solemn splendor from this shining height.
Whether some upheaval of nature reared
This tower of strength, or if 'twere once the home
Of some proud monarch of this Eden land,
She did not care to know ; it welcomed her
And sheltered with protecting arms, and made
A couch for the dear babe that slumbered still
Upon her bosom, whose bewitching smile
Beguiled her weariness, whose dimpled hands
Wandered caressingly over her breast,
While rosy pouting lips in mimicry
Dreamed of the sweet milk they so late had drunk.

For food she gathered the wild fruit and herbs
Upon the mountain side, and drank the cool
And liquid waters of a fountain near.
No other joys were hers, and none she craved,
But to behold her lovely babe unfold
Like an expanding rose or budding star,
Into a beauteous being. Soon they knew
Each other's meaning by the smiles that played,
Like gleams of sunshine, over each fair face,
Kindling the tender light within their eyes.
The forest birds soon sought their company,
And built their nests in the adjacent boughs,
To rear their young in rivalry most sweet;
And all the living things came swiftly near,—
The birds and beasts of prey grew wondrous kind,
The monarchs of the forest soon forgot
Their lairs, and whenever wounded they came
To her for comfort, and she ministered,
And tenderly bound up their wounds. Soon too
The serpents' fangs grew powerless; they sought
To bask in the warm sunshine near her door.
Whatever her sad history had been,
Her life seemed now in happiness complete,
With its full richness of maternal joy.
Sometimes the smile which hovered like twilight
Around her sweet mouth would vanish and fade,
The pensive drooping of her fringed lids
Loosened a liquid drop from her bright eyes;
But deeper still within her heart was set
The beacon light of Faith; upon the tower
She clomb each evening when the sun went down,
Striking the rude rock with a potent power,

Kindling a glory there which filled the sky.
Then, in the sunset, she would fold her arms
Around her child, drawing her ever near
And nearer, prattling sweetest words the while,
And pointing to the splendor of the flame ;
And as the twilight came with noiseless wing,
Her voice would blend with vesper song of birds,
And murmuring of winds in anthems low,
And the sweet water-falls adown the glen.

SONG OF ASTRÆA.

I.

Rest, rest, rest, —
All things sweet must rest ;
See the happy birdling's slumber
In the downy nest ;
Sweetest birdie, on my bosom
Rest, lullaby.

II.

Rest, rest, rest, —
All things fair must rest ;
See the lily bend its blossom
Close to earth's warm breast ;
Fairest flower of my bosom,
Rest, lullaby.

III.

Rest, rest, rest, —
Busy things must rest ;
See the bee in yonder chalice

Drink his fill of rest ;
Honey-bee, upon my bosom
Rest, lullaby.

IV.

Rest, rest, rest, —
All things bright must rest ;
See the day sink down in splendor
On the twilight's breast ;
Brightest day-beam, on my bosom
Rest, lullaby.

V.

Rest, rest, rest, —
Love can never rest,
Eyes of angels star-enkindled
Ne'er can be at rest ;
Star immortal, on my bosom
Rest, lullaby.

II.

As is an atom to a perfect world,
As folded bud to a full blooming flower,
A drop of shining dew to the vast sea,
An egg to the full-fledged upsoaring bird,
A leaf to the vast forest's living green,
A phosphorescent gleam to a bright star,
Morning's first beam to the resplendent day,
A page to a full volume of a life,
A prelude to a matchless symphony,
A golden string to the full instrument,
One voice to a vast choir all numberless,

A breath to the absorbing atmosphere,
An undulation to the mountain wave,
A dim world to a central potent sun,
A thought to the full powers of the mind,
A human soul to an archangel,
An archangel unto the highest God, —
Were these twain ; happy mother, happy child,
Reared 'mid enchantments which nature alone
Can give, companioned by a love as true
As constant, protecting, and kind withal,
As is God's love to us : childhood so sweet,
So unrestrained, so full of mirth and song,
That she became a bodied joy, a rare
And bright reflection of God incarnate
With love : a spirit-essence most divine
Pervaded all her form, exhaling warmth
Bright as a dream of morning, or a star
From brightest constellation in the sky ; —
A personated thought of love, a bud
Of paradise blooming awhile on earth.
Blessed childhood and blest motherhood ;
O, for a burning pen dipped in the fire
Of her pure heart, to trace its joy supreme !
O, for a lyre caught from the sainted hand
Of the great Mother of all Truth, whose strain
Might equal the wild throbbings of her soul ! —
But motherhood amid the pangs of woe,
Of painful penury and bitter toil,
Where antenatal hatred breeds disease,
And saddened labor like a heavy yoke
Grinds out the life from its poor victim's heart, —
The feeble babe is ushered into life

The accident of passion, not the fruit
Of natural love, whose blossoms ever yield
The bounty of spontaneous parentage ;—
Or motherhood amid the heartless scenes
Of gayety, where greedy Fashion holds
Her votaries in vilest servitude ;
Where midnight revelry and dance and wine,
And trailing weight of robes oppress the form,
Dim the bright lustre of the lovely eye,
Consume the roses' bloom, make paler still
The lily white upon the neck and brow,
And stint the growth of the young germ which lies
Close to the heart and shares its tumult wild,
Or, still more horrible, abortive casts
The young life from the womb, before a soul
Can fold itself within such prison cell ;
More bitter still, that motherhood that comes
In the unhallowed bonds of legal hate,
When woman, like a slave, must yield her form
To the defilement of a sanctioned lust,
But may not lift her voice against the wrong
Which outrages her first, her holiest right, —
To keep the altar of her body pure,
That her offspring may wear the sacred thought
Which she would clothe them with like snowy robes :
But O, the secret bliss of that rare boon
When perfect love and perfect union blend
Two mutual lives to one purpose of bliss,
And by the right of her maternity
The married woman veils herself with love,
Like Isis, folded in the heart of earth,
Bears her sweet burden joyously and free.

One twilight cold and gray she sought her tower,
The eyrie of her hopes and prophecies,
Where she had watched the eaglets try their wing
And seen the mother-bird dive quick beneath
To catch them on her pinions should they fall.
"So doth the Infinite with us," thought she ;
"Pushing us forth from His eternal nest
That we may learn to fly alone, His love
Meanwhile extending far beneath
To save us if we fall." Her heart was sad,
Her faith and courage failed not, but a sense
Of hunger pierced her spirit through and through ;
She famished not for food, a longing wild,
Intense, and deep, pervaded her ; she felt
That she must perish if there came no change.
Far down the giddy, trembling height she gazed,
O'er intervening forests bare and gray,
And the brown bosom of the patient earth.
Upon the plain she saw the faintest speck
Of white, speeding, like a swift thought of death
Or swifter messenger of love. Her face
Suddenly grew as pallid as the snow,
Her eyes dilated, and her bosom heaved
With quick forebodings, or with ecstasy ;
Up, up she piled the fagots, till the flame
Mounted to heaven, kindling all the fires
In the encampment of the starry spheres ;
Then, clasping her sweet daughter to her breast,
She passed an interval of hours that seemed
Each one an age of painful expectance ;
Then a swift clattering of horse's hoofs,
And crackling branches rang out on the air,

As though the rider would outstrip the winds.
Another instant and the foaming steed
Stood panting near her door ; a form was flung
Close to her own, and in another breath
Mother and child were clasped in an embrace
That reunited love alone can know, —
So close, so long, the young child frightened grew,
And cried aloud with pain ; but when she saw
The eyes that beamed on her, and heard the tones
Of deepest melody in that strange voice,
She came again and nestled near his heart
As though its shelter were her chosen home.
One could well guess that these were wedded souls,
Alike in spirit, opposite in form,
The contrast of their beauty making each
Appear more lovely ; everlasting youth
Seemed to have bathed them in its living fount,
And none could trace on either countenance
A touch of time ; yet there were lines of care
Softened and rendered beauteous by their love.
Long sat they in deep silence, too intense
Their mutual joy for speech ; the heart might break
With utterance of rapture so divine.
At last the sweet assurance of their eyes
Calmed the high waves of joy that o'er them roll'd
And found relief in words, which, like white spray
Upon the shining shore, broke from their lips.

III.

EROTION.

Found, found at last, my beautiful, my own.
How have I sought thee through this trance of years, —
Never a moment pausing in my search :
The old world haunts, and palaces so dim,
Grown gray and grim in misery and woe,
I travelled ; prison walls I scaled to clasp
Thy lovely form, and searched the dungeon cells
To find the place where they had pinioned thee ;
Within our first fair home I looked in vain,
Grim ruin, mocking, sat beside the door ;
Then toward the sea I sped, a gleaming hope
Alluring, beckoning me ever on ;
For I was told by seamen, on the shore,
That one like thee, wearing thy sacred form,
Had crossed the waters in a strange, wild way
So like thyself. This tale inspired my soul,
And I resolved to follow, though indeed
It might be but an *ignis-fatuus*, —
It was so sweet to think thou couldst not die.
My dearest love, how hast thou passed the while ?
And our sweet babe, I yearned to clasp her form
And thine close to this breast, to see her face
And feel her beauty as it beams e'en now
Upon my spirit. Tell me how thou didst escape
To this Elysium ; how thou found'st a home
So wild and beautiful ? I saw thy light
Far out upon the plain ; I knew 'twas thine,
And it became my guiding-star to thee.

ASTRÆA.

I knew that thou wouldst come, my dearest love ;
 The deep, prophetic voice within my soul
 Forever brought that sweet assurance there.
 On that wild day of fearful strife and blood,
 When we were dragged forth in chains to die,
 And our names branded 'mid derisive sneers,
 I saw thee borne away by slaves in arms, —
 I thought to dungeon, then perchance to death.
 E'en now how pale thou art ; how long wert thou
 In chains — how fly from death so imminent ?

EROTION.

I'll tell thee soon, but thine own story first.

ASTRÆA.

The one appointed to fulfill my death
 Seemed sudden struck with a swift tenderness.
 Compassionately murmuring my name
 In low pitying voice, I turned and saw
 He was a friend, who in profound disguise
 Had masked himself to mingle with our foes
 And aid us in our hour of direst need.
 At first the crowd with fiendish shout and yell
 Followed. I thought he soon would be compelled
 To yield me to their rage. At last they turned
 Pursuing thee, and then he caught me up
 And bore me to a place outside the gates
 Of the sad city ; when the night came on
 Again returned ; he could not long remain,
 But told the mob that I was dead, and brought

A form resembling mine to prove 'twas true, —
Some poor unfortunate, wearing a look
Something like mine, pursued and slain for me.
At night we journeyed to the distant shore ;
The sentinels all drunken, stupefied,
Were sleeping, and we passed unseen.
He found a small forsaken boat adrift
Upon the waters, this I quickly launched,
Embarking all alone and leaving thee.
But ah ! what could I do ? I bore her form
Close to my heart and must for her sake come,
While something whispered, thou wouldst follow me.
A band of exiles, far out on the sea,
Beheld and recognized me as their friend, —
Took me on board. After a voyage strange
And filled with wild adventures, this bright shore
Greeted our vision ; they landed me at night,
And I alone sought out this high retreat
To kindle my watch-fires and wait for thee ;
But ere I parted from my loving friends .
I made a solemn promise, if there came
A time when we could aid them, were you here,
We would respond. Now, how didst thou escape ?

EROTION.

My bravest, truest love, what hast thou borne
And suffered for my sake ! I love thee more
Than thought of Heaven or all holy things,
Save truth, and thou art Truth. They thought me dead,
And left me swinging on a scaffold high,
When one in reckless mood cut down the cords :
I feigned death, and waited till he passed ;

Then loosening the chain about my neck,
I fled, but soon fell wearied to the ground.
A mounted guard approached to pierce my breast
With his rude sword ; I sprang upon his horse,
And with one hand secured the lifted blade,
And with the other hurled him from his seat.
Meanwhile the bells were ringing joyously,
And shouts and loud huzzas proclaimed abroad
The triumph of our foes. Then I sought thee
In such disguise as I could well assume
From the poor slave, whose body I had slain.
Among our foes I passed unrecognized,
Hearing them say, with loud joyous acclaim,
That thou wert dead, — calling thee by such names
As made my forehead burn with vengeful fire
And my hand clutch the rapier I held.
But faith and hope that thou too wert alive
Caused prudence to keep watchful guard o'er me.
Then, as I said before, some fishermen,
Who saw thee trust thyself out on the sea
In that frail boat, described to me thy form,
And fashioned superstitious tales of thee.
Believing thee a spirit, no man dared
Pass o'er the waves where they had seen thee go ;
But in my inmost heart I knew 'twas thee.
The perils of our voyage I will pass, —
Shipwrecked and famished and by storms delayed,
I never let despair brood o'er my soul.
No sooner had my feet touched this fair shore
Than I heard thy sweet name breathed all around ;
Thy sad experience had won their hearts,
And they were seeking to devise some plan

To find out thy abode. With readiness
Which love forever lends, I strove to find
And bring thee thence ; but still I knew thy foes
Pursued thee, for the ship in which I sailed
Was manned by a dark crew sent in pursuit
Of thy frail bark across the waters wild.

ASTRÆA.

When our sweet babe was born, the foresters
Gave me such rest and comfort as their lives
Afford. I was as one of their own kin ;
And when I left they fain would have me stay,
The men were silent and the women wept.
I said my spirit would companion them,
And they might know that I would ever be
Their friend and sister. Is she not most fair,
Our lovely child ? I think she has thy eyes
And hair, and lips all pouting to be kissed.
Something about her forehead is like mine,
And then her form, I fancy, like my own.
But if lily e'er held a drop of dew
As pure as heaven in its golden cup,
Her form enfolds a spirit glowing white ;
Her body seems the outgrowth of her soul.
O, I have had such visions of her life
As fond aspiring love can only paint
When urged by hope for all the weary world.

EROTION.

I find her more than my imaginings
Dared prophesy : a jewel set within
Our coronet of life, to prove how fair

And pure a blossom perfect love can give.
With all our sorrows, I would rather hold
Thee and our darling thus than wear a crown
With all the world as empire ;— but these dreams
Which thy fond heart has planned : methinks a tone
Of prophesy pervades thy voice.

ASTRÆA.

Ah, yes,—

Through the dim vista of the opening years,
I have been striving with my spirit eyes
To pierce the darkness that o'erhangs the world,
And broods like fate above our eastern home.
A destiny stronger than our own will
Has brought us hither ; a new dawn of life
Is ours ; this fair wild land where our loved child
Was born, may yet become the guiding light
Of all the world, and with it linked her fate.
I know her born to fill no common sphere ;
And the high hope uplifts my saddened heart,
Until it trembles with the golden thrill
Of a proud promise, that she like a queen
Of mercy, not of might, shall pass along,
Followed by all the weary, longing ones
Who languish for this heaven-promised bourn.
And shall she not unlock the negro's chains,
Break all the old world's galling bonds, and set
The captive nations free ? A star has risen
Above her cradle ; a new Bethlehem
Is here ; and though the wise men of the East
Behold it not, one glorious in youth,
And full of hope and aspiration, saw

Its rays, and clave the unresisting seas
To find the glad fulfillment of his dreams.
Another saw in its charmed life the Isles
Of Eldorado, or the paradise
Of the proud Eastern world,—its light was hers.
O, I have taught her all her years would bear,
And watched with rapture the fair germs of truth
Spring up within her spirit. Well I know
To whom more than all others she will be
A blessing and a guiding star of love.
Woman — who, held as any chattel slave
By other slaves, the monarchs of the world,
Whose simple duty is to please their sense,
Or while away an idle hour at best ;
Or who, in Europe, sits upon a throne
Of social power and plays the mocking-bird
For some fool's pleasure, lending her rare powers
To idle mimicry and glittering show.
Woman — who sits with motionless white lips,
But dares not sing the song that rises there ;
Though genius-kindled and eloquent,
She crowds it back to break upon her heart.
Woman, who, loveless and unloved, becomes
The sneer and jest of every idler's tongue,
Because, perchance, she dares to walk alone
The narrow paths of life, rather than bear
The loathsome bonds of an unholy tie
Which her soul cannot sanction ; for a dream
Has ever burned within her heart, — a pure
A lofty bright ideal, — and its flame
Makes there a vestal altar unto God.
Woman who, at the worst, goes madly forth

From some harsh parent's roof, like a blind moth
Allured by the false glare of pleasure's flame,
Or falser promises of a dark soul ;
But who within her heart loathes things impure,
And only seeks for love and sympathy ;
Woman, who, at the best, must watch and pray,
Keeping the vestal fires forever bright,
In battlemented tower and guarded wall,
Lest some rude breath of calumny and scorn
Shall mar the altar's spotless purity, —
But who, if some bright being sudden came,
Endowed with Heaven-inspired eloquence
To break the chains and gyves that bind her thus,
Open the gates of cruel circumstance
To the bright angel opportunity,
Would uplift heart and hands in purest joy
And thankfulness, and trusting, follow her
To those pure heights only attained by those
Who choose the martyrs' glorious fiery doom,
Rather than bear the galling, gilded chains
Which unrequited love and labor forge
To bind in fetters the fair queens of earth.

EROTION.

Most worthy of a noble soul this splendid dream.
Many harsh parent plays the petty king
Over the household empire ; but he rules
With an uncertain sceptre, for the soul
Of such an one is childless, and he goes
Into the world of spirits all alone.
Mothers who rule through fear, and bare the form
Of the pale shrinking child to chastisement,

Or sting with taunting words and bitter sneers,
Have no relationship to motherhood,
Nor know the ecstasy of that full joy
Which crowns a soul made perfect by a love
Complete as nature's marriage unto God.
O, many patient, gentle, loving souls,
Chaste as Diana, and like her as pale,
Walking alone with their own secret grief,
Or pressing back the sigh for nature's ties,
Will find, on wakening from life's weary trance,
Their souls companioned by each counterpart,
And winged cherubs, each a living form
Of their own lives of spotless purity, —
Like day-dreams from the unmaternal nest
Taking their flight, and hiding in the folds
Of fleecy thought, the spirit's atmosphere ;
For all the weary waiting, better far
Go childless and unloved below, than wear
The yoke of an unequal union, or to bear
The forms that hold no image of your soul.
But O, the rapture, the divine delight,
Of wearing consciously the perfect crown
Of parentage, of being truly wed,
And from that union rear the tender buds
Which shall unfold to blossom and yield fruit
Of God, — the thought of perfect souls :
Such have the saviors and the martyrs been,
And rarest poets : every genius
Who gives unto his age a thought complete,
Hath been the offspring of marriage as pure
As that which gave a Jesus to the world.
Death and a love like this alone reveal

Unto the soul its spirit counterpart.
These are the master-passions, arrows keen
Which probe the sphere of life, revealing God.
Souls are star-born, a perfect sphere of light
And beauty, which matter but cleaves in twain,
The globe of living, perfect loveliness,
Becomes as the divided moon, as pale
And wan with many weary wanderings.
Millions thus struggle through the stagnant years
Of time and earth companionless;
But those high souls, the saviors of mankind,
Are twin-born, and their perfect lives become
The full expression of Heaven's harmonies.
Yet you remember, sweet, that such high thoughts
And ministrations bring no recompense
Of the world's fame. If this indeed shall be
The destiny of our most lovely child,
We will uplift her hands, and Heaven-endowed,
She shall walk forth protected by our love;
Our hearts shall bear her spirit ever up
Above all storms. How well we know the fate
Of those who love the Truth and seek to build
Upon the earth her dwelling, scorned, reviled,
Calumniated, and perchance betrayed,
As Truth so oft hath been; but she shall live
And triumph over all our foes.
But see, already doth the eye of day
Light with its love the ever-longing earth,
Kindling his fires upon the eastern hills,
A beacon to the world, as was thy light
To my night wandering spirit. Let us rest.

PART II.
FRATERNIA.



Dedicated to

LUCRETIA MOTT,

THE MOTHER OF REFORM; THE FRIEND OF THE SLAVE;
AND TYPE OF TRUE WOMANHOOD.



FRATERNIA.

I.

A CITY in the wilderness, a calm
Sequestered spot, shut from the ocean wild
By a mild interlude of land and sea,
Where two rivers, whose sources rise afar
Amid the hills, and who with swiftest feet
Hasten like lovers in response to fate,
To blend their lives in one. Another stream,
Not far away, its sullen courses wind
In sombre silence through o'erhanging banks
And shading forests, — like a suitor spurned
But bade unto the marriage-feast full late, —
Merges at last its waters with their own,
Preferring thus to yield its loneliness
That they may be more happy. Nature seemed
To form this favored spot for special use,
And one, obedient to her behests,
Planned with prophetic vision and the soul
Of progress, a vast peopled city : streets
Narrow and close, long rows of houses neat ;
Trees which the ready hand of ravishment
Had torn away, replanted to give shade
To streets whose parallels and angles fine
Were exact lines of strictest measurement ;
While old-time roads swept in protestingly,

With many a curve and diagonal line,
To prove the constant warfare 'twixt the town
And nature, destined too swiftly to pass
Beneath the encroaching wheels of time away.
A building suited to those simple times,
Unconscious of a touch of art or grace,
An edifice of walls with little else
To mark its presence, save a cupola
Or dome, wherein was placed a brazen bell
To sound alarms of fire or dreadful war,
Or ring an anthem which might shake the world.
Thither, from her retreat among the hills,
And from her music-haunted ivy bowers,
And battlements of sun-besplendored clouds,
From flying birds and swifter flying winds,
From summer haunts, where the wild honey-bee
Reveled in sweets like nectar for their lips,
And from the hearts of nature's children free,
The recompense and respite from all care,
(Save the protecting compensating love
She bare her daughter and her counterpart,)
From all that could allure her to forget
The terror of her life, — came Astræa.

Not in a chariot inlaid with gems
And drawn by snowy steeds caparisoned
In richest splendor, — slaves in livery
Attendant on their slightest wish or breath, —
Not with triumphal arch and banners gay,
Nor wild acclaim of populace, nor wreaths
Of festive flowers, nor retinue of proud
And mounted cavaliers, the loved ones came,

But with the ringing of a single bell,
Whose solemn strokes fell on the startled air
As thunderbolts fall when the pent up clouds
Pour forth their torrents 'mid the lightning's flame.
Swiftly at night, companioned by their child, —
So beautiful they dreaded lest the stars
Should envy the rare brightness of her eyes
And snatch her to their high serene abodes, —
They came all unattended, unannounced ;
Appeared within the council chamber, sat
Upon the eminence prepared for them,
Within an alcove, and apart from all,
Listened, with brows as calm and high as heaven,
To all the earnest anxious words there spoke, —
Words of the patriots, whose noble souls
Had risen in revolt against their wrongs.
One young and brave appealed to strength of arms,
And one with mind as clear as thought of truth
Spoke in defense of manhood and their right
To the best laws ; and one with calm sweet eye
Approved their utterance with firm mild voice ;
And one whose forehead seemed to touch the sky
Spoke words of wisdom consecrate to God.
But chiefly for their cherished guests they spake,
Uniting all their voices in a pledge,
Which through all time shall be proclaimed the best,
The highest offering to Liberty.
Would that among them there had been a mind
Like the divine Lycurgus, full of might,
To make that utterance forever bind
The nation by a sacrifice as grand.
They thus addressed their loved and honored guests :

“Lady, your sorrows and your loveliness,
The story of your wrongs, your presence here,
The love we bear you and the sacred right
We have, in common with all human kind,
To worship at the shrine of truth and love,
The need we have of your blest counsel here,
Would fain inspire us, in our love for these,
To crown you as our queen; but something here
Within our hearts, forbids us to make thrones
Or worship idols, and our manhood holds
That all are equal in the sight of God.
We worship only Him; those attributes
Which constitute His being, we behold
Embodied in your form, and these you love;
Therefore accept as one eternal link
In the great chain that binds us all to God
Such homage as our grateful hearts can give
To the rare beauty of your form and soul,
The spotless purity of your true heart,
The noble love you offer unto us,
The threefold blessing which your presence brings;
Not as a queen, but as a woman dear,
Our mother and our friend, abide with us.
And thou, most noble consort, unto whom
We owe a double debt of gratitude,
For your own presence and your guiding hand
To lead to us the being we have sought
And loved so long, who masked her lovely form
From our fond sight with nature's Isis veil,
Be you the twain whose single purpose binds,
Like those twin stars whose beams distance makes one
Pure ray of undivided guiding light,

Holding us evermore to God and Heaven.
And for this lovely being, this rare child,
We have no language to express our joy,
Our admiration, and our fondest love.
Her presence here is as a vision bright,
Seen in a lofty trance by one inspired ;
She holds her beauty like a bud, whose leaves
Give promise of surpassing loveliness.
A drop of dew trembling within the cup
Of the white lily is less bright than she ;
More like a star dropped from Urania's crown,
Startling the world with its diviner flame.
We pray that the fond hope which will arise,
That she and you shall ever be our own,
To bind our souls and yours in strongest ties,
May be fulfilled. Already she becomes
Our daughter, sister, and our angel guide,
Uplifting our sad hearts from the cold cares
And groveling wishes of this sordid world.
We pledge to you our hearts, our lives, our hands ;
First for your own dear selves, and next for those
Who shall come after us, inheriting
Such curses or such blessings as we build ;
And lastly for ourselves, because we owe
That tribute to our manhood and to God
Whose potent power has given life and mind."

II.

The trumpet sound of war, the dread alarms
Of battles, sights and sounds of human woe,
The scent of blood upon the air, its stain
On earth's bosom, the Eternal Hunger,

Death, gnawing at life's door, corruption's breath
Breeding contagion on the stifling air,
Famine with her wild eyes and ashen face,
The spectres grim of dim and haunting fears,
All sights and sounds congealing the warm blood,
Startled the loving twain, renewed the dread
Lest they again should be basely betrayed
And their child murdered by the wanton hands
That sought their lives. 'Tis true the patriots
Were brave and strong, but stronger sometimes seemed
Their foes, for tyranny wears a bold front
Till vanquished ; then the coward shrinks away,
* Like some foul serpent robbed of its dread sting.
Once when the war waged fiercest mid the snows
Of wildest winter, Hope grew pale and dim,
And Famine, mocking, threatened the small band
With terrors worse than death by any foe.
The soldiers sickened, their brave leader saw
Them faint and falter by the weary way ;
The stern necessities of their hard fate
Pressed down upon him like a leaden load.
It was a day when they must win or die ;
Their foes were full of life and strong with food,
Surely there must come succor or they fail :
They rallied, but the first fire scattered them
Like trees before the giant tempest's breath ;
It seemed their cause must perish ; losing this
They lost the dear lives of the sacred ones
Who though inseparable, aided them
In every hour of peril ; in each fight
They seemed an omnipresence, everywhere
Encouraged, rallied, even led them on ;

And in the camp they hovered o'er the couch
Of sick and dying ; from their homes allured
The noble women to attend on those
Who sacrificed their lives that they might live.
O, those were hours which quickened every thought
Of goodness, and awakened all the strength
Within the gentle bosom of the fair.
What she did they could do ; inspired by her
They each became her own, and all her grace
Hovered around them and became as theirs.
Even now they came again to fill the breach,
Seizing the standard from a dying hand,
And foremost rode beside the leader brave.
Victory smiled upon him, bound his brow
With laurel wreaths, and in their loud acclaim
The people sought to crown him as their king ;
Forgetting for the moment their dear pledge :
“ Have we not respite sought from tyranny
Of kings and thrones, and shall I forge the chain
Which these loved beings by my side have riven
From our own helpless hands ? ” he said. “ Ye rave
If ye would other rulers own save those
Who have given us all, and in return
Ask nothing but our love ! ” Then with huzzas
They pledged themselves anew to liberty,
And plighted all their worship unto Heaven.
The day of triumph o'er them fully dawned,
Its brightening promise tinting all the sky
With a purpureal splendor divine ;
Peace brooded, white-winged, o'er the mountain brow,
And nestled in the valleys ; happiness
Seemed to have found at last a fitting home,

Where a new Eden might adorn the world :
The earth renewed her life, the bursting flowers
Blossomed on every gory battle-field
Bedewed with tears, the angels' offering,
Which Night, descending, scattered o'er the graves
Of those who perished, Freedom's life to save.
All nature answered to the thrill of joy
That woke with Liberty's triumphal song,
Reverberating far amid the hills,
And echoing to the remotest star.
But here, as everywhere, dissension came :
A serpent, whom the winter night of war
Drove to its den but slew not, now came forth
To bask again in the sunshine of peace.
Success kindles ambition, and the lust
For lawless power, in the hearts of those
Not wholly true to virtue. None beheld
This lurking presence, save the one whose eyes
Were brighter far than piercing shafts of flame
From the swift lightning ; and she even saw
That they, unconscious of its deadly power,
Were yielding to the poison it exhaled. —
So does the moral atmosphere become
Contaminated by an impure breath,
The moral sense is deadened, and the mind
Yields, the swift prey to its most potent spell. —
So madly joyous were they with success
They could not see the danger lurking near ;
Intoxicated, they forgot the pledge
Once made, most sacred, to Astræa's name,
And the brave few who spoke protestingly,
Were warned to wake no voice of dreadful war.

Thus were they silenced when their hearts were full ;
O, those were days so pregnant for all time,
That if she spoke not she well knew her name
To future ages would go down in shame.
Then he who loved her felt her inmost thought,
And breathed upon the multitude his words
Of wisdom, till they all were calm. His voice
Had such sweet power to charm them, the high souls
Of those who serve the truth were deeply moved :
“ Mother of mysteries, whose bosom holds
The secrets of all time, the prophecies
Of that unfolding future, whose bright bud,
Like an eternal rose, blossoms in space,
Fills with its essence the sad offering
Of our poor lives, veiled Isis, whose soft breast
Nurtured the nations, till they fled from thee,
And made them fitting gems to crown the brow
Of the Most High,—be Thou our strength to-day !
Let us return to Thee and converse hold
With Thy sweet voice, and learn anew the page
Whereon Thy sacred records all are traced,
Illuminated by those wondrous minds
Whose deeds shine brighter far than burnished gold.
Let us make ruins of our prison walls,
And those obnoxious and foul dungeon cells,
Almshouses and asylums, dear alone
To darkness and corruption ; those dim vaults
We misname sacred temples, and profane
God’s holy name by hatred to our kind ;
Those hot-beds too of crime, where avarice
And pride walk hand in hand, to bind the thing
We call enlightenment—that barren flame,

Whose fatuous and superficial glare
Makes room for vices, each one like a spot
Of leprosy, upon the nation's breast. —
Let us return to Thee, Thy perfumed breath
Rises like incense from Thy altars old ;
Let us retrace the long and winding way
In which the world has trod afar from Thee,
Finding again the path which, parallel
To ours, runs through the cycle of all years
And makes the world a counterpart of heaven.
Nations begin in crime and violence
What they must hold by fraud, and evermore
Perpetuate through fear. Kings never dare
Make perfect laws, for then they must become
Their subjects ; it is easy to make rules
For others, set the golden word on high,
For all the world to follow save ourselves.
We claim exemption by a special plea
And hope to pettifog our way to heaven.
Work ill begun, no influence of art
Can ever make it right ; the child deformed,
Misshapen at its birth by some outrage
On the sweet law of love, or driven blind
By ante-natal violence, or worse,
Warped in its mind by false blending of lives
That never were created to be one ;
These wrongs can ne'er be righted, till the law
Of gradual, aspiring change, or death,
Has set the fettered, fainting spirit free.
If we would not wholly become absorbed,
Obscured, and lost in foul ambition's night,
Let us fulfill the solemn, sacred vow

Upon the altar we have builded here ;
But if we love not Thee and e'er forsake
Thy wondrous loveliness, and our dull ears
Hear not Thy voice of melody, and eyes
Grow bleared and blinded by Fame's falsest glare ;
If we feel not Thy sweet lips touch our own,
Nor drink the nectar of Thy dewy breath ;
If Thy arms fold us not in sweet embrace,
And we feed not from Thy maternal breast ;
If we feel not Thy pulses' gentle beat
In unison with our heart-throbbings wild ;
If all the rapture which the heart can know
Is not awakened by Thy presence dear, —
Then let decay sit mocking in our hearts,
And grim despair hold empire over us ;
Let our forms wither, and our wrinkled brows
Yield the sere crop of sorrow's whitened locks ;
Let us not taste of gladness, never know
The sound of joyous melody ; let all the weight
Of years bend us with premature decay ;
Let the sun shine not on our sightless orbs,
And madly, as a drunken poet reels
Down the steep mazes of some giddy height,
Or as the nations of all time have plunged
Down the abyss of swift destruction's night,
Let us, giddy and blinded by ambition, go
Till dread annihilation's fearful maw
Devours all that has made us proud and great."

III.

As though a beautiful expanding rose,
Whose crimson petals, waiting to unfold,

Loitered in sweet and silent mystery
For the caressing winds and sun to pour
Their winsome offerings upon its shrine,
Were suddenly to feel a blighting breath
Within the charmed centre of its heart,
And all its leaves grow sere in one short hour —
But the sorrows of childhood are fleeting, they say,
The roses return with the first breath of May,
And the blight never touches the heart of the tree,
For the root is as close and as warm as can be —
As though a calm and lovely April morn,
Replete with bursting life and song of birds,
Alive with wingéd breezes, everywhere
Bearing prophetic odors from the south,
Skies tinted with pale cerulean light,
Were, on the instant, to exchange its joy,
Its song and fragrance for stern wintry blasts,
Blackening all the opalescent sky,
Leaving the sad earth drear and desolate —
But the sorrows of youth are fleeting, they say,
For the tempest is over and past in a day,
And the storm-clouds hurrying, scurrying by,
Give strength to the forest and blue to the sky —
As though a prelude, wondrously sweet,
Trembling upon a lyre with golden strings,
Deep'ning into a matchless symphony,
Were strangely struck to discord horrible,
Shattering all the notes, till shivering
And quivering they died in dreary wails —
But the sorrows of youth are fleeting, they say,
For Æolus breathes on his harp every May;
And the chords in the heart may be tuned to love,
By the joy of a purpose outwrought from above. —

Alone, alone, first she would wildly weep,
And fling her form upon her lonely couch,
Calling her mother's name in piercing tones
Of deepest love and darkest agony :

“O, whither hast thou gone, thou wert most good.
Didst thou not love me? But it was not kind
Thus, thus to leave me ; I will follow thee.
What is it to be dead? I too would die —
Where have they carried thee? Why am I here?
Can I not find our peaceful mountain home?
I know full well thou’rt waiting for me there.”
Then, when the fountain floods of grief were drained,
And tears would flow no more to ease her pain,
And words were frightened by their own sad sound,
Pale, silent, tearless, in her loneliness,
She moaned and wailed and wandered day by day ;
Would she ever thus walk amid the gloom —
The darkened shadow of that dread eclipse
Called death, which, if we see not clearly, leaves
A blank, cold void forever in the heart? —
How long it was she knew not, for when woe
Sits quite alone within the heart's deep shrine
Each moment is an age of misery,
And ages are as naught.

At last there came
Summons from those to whose kind care and love
She had by her dear mother's last bequest
Been left. They sat in those high sacred halls,
And all were wise and great, and some were true.
To the famed court she willingly repaired,
Perchance to learn where her beloved ones were,
Or aught that would alleviate her woe.

Then, when they saw her grief and loneliness,
Her beauty dawning into maiden grace,
All breasts were smote with sudden tenderness.
Anew they pledged her by those sacred names,
Which they still cherished in their heart of hearts,
That peace and happiness should aye be hers.
To this they gave their honor and their lives ;
But they were burdened with the many cares
Attendant on their public services.
And all bethought themselves if they knew one,
To whom, for sweet companionship and care,
They could intrust their beautiful young charge.
Prostrate before those mighty men she knelt
In supplication, saying, " If ye e'er have loved
The sacred names ye now pledge unto me,
If ye believe in th' wise and good of earth,
If nature holds for you any sweet charms,
Let me return to that loved mountain home,
Where, something tells me, my beloved are.
Or if pale death has taken them away,
Their souls still haunt those lonely solitudes,
And I shall feel them in the atmosphere ;
There none will be compelled to care for me,
And the wild eagle will soon bring my food,
Or still among the untaught foresters
I have full many friends who love me well."
" Alas, dear child ! " they answered, " your poor brain
Has been with grief and loneliness o'erwrought,
And fancy has but pictured that wild place,
For well we know you never could have lived
As you describe : the mountains are most bare ;
And eagles do not rob their young of food

To succor even one so sweet as thou.
As for the savages you call your friends,
They are as fierce as the wild beasts, and soon
Would find a fearful trophy in your blood.
When you came to us with your own dear ones,
It was from far across the distant sea.”
She would have spoken, but she stood amazed
At the base falsehood, uttered in the guise
Of love and kindness; and alas, poor child!
How could she know that any hearts were true,
Since all sat silently in stern accord
With words to which she could find no reply?
But as the bursting torrent of her grief
And indignation swelled to their full height,
And would have hurled the utterances back,
Another, blander than the first, then spoke :
“There is a lady here who is well loved
And honored by us all. Knowing your grief
And tender years, she proffers you a home
With her. We cannot tell the happiness
Which it will cause her heart to comfort you,
And you will love her well;—a bond is made
By her and us, placed in the archives here,
Each pledging to fulfill our sacred trust,
And hold to you forever unimpaired
The priceless heritage wholly your own.
We wait upon the lady for each wish
You may express, except the cruel one
That would deprive us of your presence here.”

PART III.
L L A M I A.



Dedicated to

WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON,

AND HIS NOBLE COADJUTORS, THE MEN AND WOMEN OF
THE AMERICAN ANTI-SLAVERY SOCIETY.



LLAMIA.

I.

A WOMAN came, with voice like liquid drops
Of water in a deep and darkened well ;
Her presence was at once a mystic spell
Of wonder and of terror ; her clear eyes
Reflected light, answering not the gaze,
But rather gave back lightnings not their own.
Her face was fair and cold as the orb'd moon,
But not so pure its clear transparent light,
And far too dazzling its rare loveliness.
Around her low and snowy forehead wound,
Coil upon coil, her iridescent hair :
Now black, now purple, violet or gold,
As light alternately with shadow played
Upon the tresses that abundant fell
Sinuously adown her heaving breast.
Her form was perfect ; to its faultless mould
Was added a rare undulating grace
Of motion, far more beautiful than rest, —
Suggesting all those weird and wondrous shapes,
All tides of oceans sliding up dark sands,
All forest branches swaying tempest-tossed
And intertwined, until each one is merged
In sweet embracement with its sister tree ;
All tendrils of long, coiling, shining stems

And slimy grasses waving to and fro ;
All gliding movements suddenly withdrawn
Within a black and silent forest lake,
Whose polished surface carefully conceals
The processes of life hidden beneath.
But not the ravishment of these fair charms,
Nor wealth of her surpassing loveliness,
Could so enchain and fascinate the soul,
So win the admiration of all minds ;
And even when the tongue refused to praise,
Draw silent homage from the worshippers,
'Twas the completeness of her mystery.
A mind whose attributes were only veiled,
Not wholly hidden by her loveliness ;
In whom wisdom and virtue seemed to find
At last a fitting oracle, — seemed, I say,
For neither eye nor mind could penetrate
Beyond the dazzling splendor of that form :
Grace, culture, art, beauty, and piety,
Modest demeanor, not timidity,
A ready ear for other's suffering,
A honeyed tongue to utter sympathy,
Perfect control of every matchless gift
With which she lavishly had been endowed ;
The full embodiment of every grace,
And those high half angelic attributes
Which link pure womanhood to the Divine.
Or if she were not these, then, truly then,
Sister to that bright fallen Lucifer,
Whose dread exile left heaven bare and void.
Hesperia fixed on her those sad eyes ;
Suddenly all their wonted fire returned :

Her cheek grew crimson with the reverse tide
Of life and thought renewing their career,
Her slender form swayed like the willow-tree,
And look and gesture eloquently said :
“Lady, though fair your face, ’tis strange to me ;
Whoever you may be, I love you not.”
Llamia smiled in sweet complacency,
Turning away her gaze, but soon she spoke ;
Hesperia listened ; there was a tone
In that strange voice of rarest power to charm ;
’Twas not the import of the soothing words,
Only the modulation of the sound
Penetrated her mind, and o’er her soul
Wove a soft mist-like spell that lured the sense.
Then Llamia extended her white hand,
Touched tenderly the young girl’s shining hair,
Until she grew quite calm, — if it be calm
To sit with motionless pale lips and hands
And eyes gazing on vacancy, the while
The lids fall heavily, half curtaining
The splendid orbs of shaded violet.
A sound of voices pleading for the child,
Murmured amid the gathering multitude :
But when they saw how quietly she went
With Llamia, their voices died away,
And though their hearts were sad with forebodings,
Reluctantly their lips said, “It is well.” —
And here I write it, whatsoever comes
To the dear child for whom this song is sung,
For whom these tearful blood-stained words are traced,
That those men in the inmost recesses
Of their fond hearts, loved her full tenderly,

Wished her each good that Heaven could bestow,
All blessings the fair earth could ever yield ;
And did intend to fill the faithful pledge,
The solemn promise made in her young years,
To those who left her in their promised care.
I write it here for every one to read,
That more through love, than fear or paltry gain,
They thus performed a part, acted a lie,
That they might shield her from those open foes
Who sought her life ; they thought no further ill
Could come to her than those woes incident
To any maiden beautiful and loved.
I write it here whatever else may come,
That 'twas an error of the mind, and not
Perversion of the heart, that thus they stood
Between her and the only perfect joy
That could be hers, barring the sacred door
Of nature 'gainst her tender dawning life,
And binding her by an unhallowed pledge.

II.

CALIOS.

THE POET.

Anear the heart of the metropolis,
Withdrawn a little from its din and glare,
Set like an emerald 'mid baser things,
Was an inclosure of rare evergreens,
So closely and so densely interlaced,
That an impenetrable barrier
Was formed to all approach, save where an arch,
O'erspanned with trailing vines and branches twined
Of trees, standing like stately sentinels,
Stretching their long arms o'er the iron gates.
Without, one could not guess the loveliness
Concealed within this hallowed retreat.
'Tis true on unseen wings the odors fell
Upon the weary trav'ler's grateful sense, —
Or song of birds, the robin and wood-thrush,
Would startle all the air to vibrant notes ;
And glimpses, through the intertwining trees,
Of a white temple wondrous and rare,
Would flash upon the wand'rer's wondering eye.
To whom the place belonged no one could tell ;
Or if an occupant or worshipper
E'er entered or passed from its lonely haunts.
Some dared to say 'twas haunted, and strange tales
Were told of dark deeds done in years ago ;

Others that a recluse, unseen, of men,
Yet watching all from his secure retreat, —
Mysterious his movements, and his origin
A wild conjecture, — within dwelt alone.
Thither at night came Llamia, disguised,
Companioned by her young and lovely charge
Close veiled, unseen by all ; yet silently
The massive gates swung back at their approach,
And the full flood of sweet and wild perfume
Fell round them, filling every outward sense
With rare intoxication and delight.
By the pale moon Hesperia could trace
The weird and witching beauty everywhere, —
The moss-grown paths, the over-arching trees,
Patches of emerald lawn, star-paved with flowers,
Vines trailing, clinging, twining all around ;
And from one dark recess an ancient stone,
Carved, as she knew, with cunning craft and skill,
Startled her heart as though a form of life
Had peered upon her from that sylvan shade ;
But Llamia hastened with rapid feet.
Soon the chief wonder of that lovely place
Arose before the maiden's raptured gaze, —
A snowy edifice, perfect, unique,
Leaned its fair outline 'gainst the midnight sky.
So was her soul stirred by this strangest scene, —
The hour, the mystery, the beauty there, —
That she could only gaze and drink her fill
Of loveliness ; she saw not but was moved
With wonder to possess the secret thought
Of Llamia in this strange pilgrimage,
Ready to break the fascinating spell

That now held its supreme entire control
Over her spirit, a vague memory
Or dream, that sometime she had seen
What she now saw, and felt the same intense
And undefined pleasure. They had passed
The marble steps and pillared portico ;
Already, unannounced, the opened door
Bade them enter, and other inner doors
As silently and magically swung
At their approach. She stood transfixed and pale
Within an oval room, o'ercanopied
With blue, studded with silver, diamond stars,
And hung with heavy folds of drapery
Crimson and white, sweeping down to the floor
Of softest green, like velvet mosses sweet.
Upon an eminence, a purple throne
Uplifted, sat a strange, wild, pallid man
With snowy robes, and flowing locks back thrown
From a high polished brow of dazzling white,
Beneath which flashed dark eyes so piercing bright
That every gleam seemed like a point of flame.
A silver band rested upon his head,
And on his pallid face, youthful but wan,
Flitted a smile of patience, half like pain.
But if this wild strange place enchanted her,
For Llamia there seemed nor peace nor rest.
She hurriedly advanced and, bending low,
Said, "O, most potent sorcerer, wherefore
Hast thou thus summoned us through the dark night
By the o'erpowering magic of that will
Which I can never question. I have sought
Thy wiser counsels when my way seemed dark,

But now tis full of life and hope and joy,
And I would fain have spared the young bird there
Another pang of terror, for this scene
Is poorly fitted for a soul like hers."

"Thou knowest, Llamia, thy speech is vain, —
The idle babbling of thy false smooth tongue.
Thou knowest I have sought through many years
This lovely image thou wouldst fain defile,
And I have summoned all the powers above,
Around, and in the midnight air,
To force thee thither with thy fair young charge,
That I might warn her of thy treachery,
And bid her brave all things rather than take
The honey-cup of poison thou wouldst give."
Llamia writhed beneath his steady gaze,
As a charmed serpent robbed of its dread sting,
Nor ventured a reply. For Hesperia
This was a moment of supremest joy ;
The words, the import of their talk was nought,
She gazed upon the stranger's pale sad face,
And the walls parted. Once again she stood
On the loved mountain's height, her childhood's home.
She heard the song of birds and her glad sense
Drank the clear sunshine and pellucid air ;
She wandered at her will the wilds among,
And now she pauses where a precipice
Opens its yawning mouth far, far below.
In childish bravery she ventures near,
When, conscious of the danger, her swift feet
Already turn to bear her from the place,
When lo, upon the very outer verge
Of an o'erhanging moss-grown rock, reclined.

A youth in silent slumber softly clothed,
The soft wind toying with his heavy hair,
And dreams like smiles hovering round his face.
Full well her intuitions taught her heart
That to waken him suddenly were death.
So, carefully concealed within the shade,
In mimicry complete she gave her voice
Wings, and the clear note of the wild wood-thrush
Fell on the dreamer's ear with rhapsody
Divine; yet stifling all his yearnings wild
To see the tiny warbler, he moved slow
And softly from the deadly resting-place.
Then all was still, the sleeper looked around,
Wondered if he were dreaming, and beheld
For the first time the fearful chasm below.
Then a sweet voice broke the still atmosphere, —
“Twas I that wakened you, call me wood-thrush.”
And out from her retreat the fair child sprang
Like woodland fairy, and as soon was gone.
Not fled her image from the poet's heart,
For all his days and nights were haunted then
With one sweet sound and one beloved form.
But no weak words now fell from their mute lips,
No glance betrayed their wondrous new embrace, —
The recognition of their mutual souls.
His voice grew like the solemn sounding sea,
While thus he spake, “O lady, fair as morn,
And youthful as the very dream of youth,
Pure as the snow, endure and suffer all
That Heaven may decree to your young heart;
But ever 'gainst the spell this woman holds,
Who for a space stands between God and thee,

Be thou as firm as rock of adamant.
She has a power sometimes o'er thy form,
But never can her purpose touch the soul,
For she is false as thou art good and fair."
Then turning to the other one, he said, —
"Go, Llamia, and when again I call,
"Twill be unto a doom as dread and dire
As is thy life seemingly bright to-day;
Thy charge go with thee, but no subtlety
Of thy foul arts can stain or mar her soul."
Once more the magic moving doors unclosed,
And out into the fragrant starlit air
The two went forth, treading the winding paths,
So near each other they could feel the breath
Low issuing from each warm living mouth, —
But far apart in soul as Heaven and Earth.

HEART SONG OF HESPERIA.

I.

But O, for the joy of that maiden's soul,
She who but so late
Was all desolate,
Her soul shouted aloud and beyond control.

II.

And as her feet sped o'er the raptured ground,
Like soft music's spell,
Their swift falling fell
And made the world echo with one joyous sound.

III.

For she held a thought like a bursting rose
In her longing heart,
And would not depart,
But awaited the breath of the dew to uncloze.

IV.

She heeded not the deserted street,
But she sang a song
The whole way along,
And it floated afar like an odor sweet.

V.

She saw not the glaring dazzling wall,
Nor noted the door,
With its high arch o'er,
Nor the minions that waited her slightest call.

VI.

For her heart was thrilled with a new delight,
Her mind was away
On the hills of day,
As a lark who singeth his song out of sight.

VII.

But O, for the hope of that maiden's heart,
Like a mountain stream,
Like a seraph's dream,
Like a thought of the Ever-living—a part.

VIII.

She noted not that the way was long,
For she saw afar,
Like a beacon-star,
The light of her soul blazing pure and strong.

IX.

She heeded not that the many, moved
By her loneliness,
By her deep distress,
Sought her and honored as one beloved.

X.

Not one of the flattering sycophants,
Who in Llamia's name
To her altar came,
Could waken her soul from its joyous trance.

XI.

But O, for the faith of that maiden's soul,
So surpassing high,
Like a star in the sky,
Enfolding and holding with silent control.

XII.

There is need of thy joy, O maiden of snow,
For the serpent moves
On the sleeping doves,
By the deep subtle charm of its evil vow.

XIII.

Draw close to thy soul thy vestal rose
And robes flowing wild ;
O thou undefiled,
For the gateways of destiny swiftly unclose.

III.

INTERLUDE.

If, from the brow of star-encircled hills
The tempest tosses all his plumes of flame,
And, like a giant falcon, screams afar
O'ershadowing the valley with his wings,
Till earth and atmosphere are moved anew
With the majestic purpose of the storm ;—
Or, suddenly, the splendid fires are lit
Upon the mountain tops and in the sky,
Lighting the lower world with liquid rays
Too brilliantly intense for sight to bear,
What wonder if the dazzling glory be
Too radiant for our dim, weary eyes,
And we grow blind gazing upon its light,
As the mad poet did who strove to grasp
The fiery chariot of the great sun ;
Or him whose spirit sought to reconcile
The beautiful glad universe of God
With the pale errors of man's foolish brain ?
And when he saw how utterly was truth
Revealed in nature's perfect potent plan,
His spirit scorned the grosser form it wore,

And was drawn upward to the soul of God
As the skylark is summoned to the dawn.
Sometimes Nemesis closes all the gates
By which we might escape the agony
Of aimless being. E'en the boon of death
Denies, and forces back the swelling tides
Of fervid fire imprisoned in the soul, —
Until a sudden joy or sorrow smites
Our hearts, and the full fountains flow in floods,
As wintry ice is melted by the rain
Of early spring. If we but knew the path
That often lies concealed close to our feet,
Or if the way of duty would but ope
Each day unto our eager, longing eyes,
Our spirits ne'er would weary, but would go
Gladly as children by their parents led
Through forest paths and meadows sweet with dew,
Or cities' gayly crowded thoroughfares,
Where'er new pleasures or new knowledge came.
But hearts grow dull, and lives barren and void,
Because the circle of stern circumstance
Remains for aye unbroken. That pale joy,
The stale and shallow mockery of bliss,
Grows wearisome to the satiated heart,
Because the dreary treadmill of dull care
Permits no bubbling fount of liquid love
To well from the eternal source of things
Renewing and replenishing its flame ;
Because their lips are kissed not by the breath
Of that sweet being whose supernal grace
Hallows all scenes and gilds the lowliest state
With glimpses of a heritage sublime.

E'en sorrow, with her silent shafts, can rend
The strongest chains of desolate despair ;
And as the ocean swallows the small streams,
Or the sun's rays eclipse the taper's light,
So does the larger grief engulf the less,
And both are swept away by very force
Of their own violence. But thou, O Love,
Thou, from whose presence desolation flies,
And all consuming, all corroding care,
Within whose light no languor can abide,
Illumining the void and barren vaults
Of worldly ruin with thy wondrous beams,
Usurping every fear and doubt and pain
With thy fair image, entering the tombs,
Prisons, and charnel-houses of the soul,
And rearing ever there thy matchless dome,—
Gold-paven, star-illumined, glorified ;
Thou revelation of the soul of things,
Thou incarnating spirit, and thou flame,
Consuming all unworthiness and dross ;
Thou sister of the silver-sandaled Death,
Whose shining shafts reveal us unto God,
And Him to us, and to ourselves our soul ;
Thou golden goddess of the golden sphere,
Revealing to our swift awakened souls
The splendid images of Hope and Truth.
Greater art thou than Death, for thou art Birth
And Life and Resurrection ;— all things past
Are known and hallowed in thy soft eyes.
The present is not young but old as thou,
And all the future has been seen by thee ;
There is nor birth nor death, nor time nor change,

For all things are absorbed, blended in thee,
Enfolded and pervaded by thee, Love.

IV.

The home of Llamia, — if two such names
Can thus be coupled, — for her beauty's sake
We well might wish the sacred thought of home
Had entered once into her heart and mind.
But for the subtle art which clothed her here
And masked her thought from all, save him alone
Who had that night revealed her to herself ;
But for the sophistry and self deceit
That made her ever love the thing she was
And only hate discovery and blame ;
Courting all falsehood but to garnish o'er,
With semblance of fair truth, her corruption ;
But for the native poison that usurped
All purer springs and overflowed her soul,
Tainting, corrupting, fascinating all ;
But for the web of her whole being, wove
With deeds that to reveal or separate
Would show the flimsy flaw of the whole woof,
And even rob her of the graceful poise
With which she carried every point in life ;
But for the innate purpose of a soul
Permitted thus, by God, to wear a form
Of loveliness, in which to hide the sin
Of man and of itself, until it grew
Hideous and unlovely from the void within ; —
But for all this, she that night would have flung
Aside her veil of treachery and guilt
Before the being whom she had betrayed,

In act but far more terribly in thought,
And turned her whole perverted stream of life
To the pure source of being, that its springs
Might become purified and crystal clear.
But ah, when nature masks a principle
In fair forms or misshapen images,
'Tis that the fullness of the primal law,
By which the soul stands at the last complete,
Shall by reflection of all opposites,
All dark and sinful lives, all crimes and woes,
Prove how o'er-masterful is the Divine,
How even godless lives reveal God's love.

Home with four glaring, dazzling walls,
Ablaze with windows upon every side,
Facing the wide and crowded thoroughfare ;
A place made weary by all weary eyes,
From whence sickening odors ever pour,
To fill the fetid fainting atmosphere.
A palace amid thousands where the throng
Of Fashion's votaries forever press ;
A place where teeming opulence and pride,
Blar-eyed debauchery and dull excess,
Pale-faced luxury and all her train,
Walk hand in hand sometimes with chastity.
Where maidens and sweet children lose their bloom
Amid the brazen glare of leering eyes ;
Where doting parents, led by vain conceit,
Offer the innocent, a sacrifice.
To this came Llamia, bringing her charge
Amid the regal throng in fashion's court ;
Surrounded by the fawning, flattering crowd,

Feted, courted, admired, feared of all.
Amid the splendor as a lily pale
Bloomed the fair being whom fate had decreed
To share the only home Llamia knew.
Within this strange and glittering abode
Was one on whom Llamia lavishly
Bestowed her constant and untiring care, —
That which in higher natures is named love,
In her was an o'erruling passion-fire
That outweighed and eclipsed all other things.
The object of this fond, caressing care,
She called her son, — nor dare we break the spell
Of the mysterious chain which bound their souls.
When Hesperia first saw him, her soul
Revolted from the strange, hideous sight:
A small, misshapen head — with feeble face
O'erhung with clustering curls like Llamia's —
Set on a body so deformed and dwarfed
That no resemblance to the human form
Could well be traced ; each separate member
Differed from its companion, and was hung
With loose joints and unwieldy sinews there,
Refusing to perform the purposes
For which life, limb, and human form were made.
Diseases rank and loathsome seemed to hold
Their dread enthralment over all his frame,
While noxious vapors filled the fetid air
With foul contagion. Vainly Llamia
Strove to conceal his many maladies ;
His feeble voice was sharp, and pierced the air
With its complainings ; but upon his face
And in his eye the passion *Ætna* fires

Held their consuming carnival of shame,
And every lineament bore the trace
Of the dread curse of moral infamy.
Attendant on his slightest wish a throng
Of menials obeyed his low desires,
And every cruel form of punishment
Was visited upon the recreant.
Around his room, close to his hand, were hung
The gyves, fetters, and torturing instruments
With which to goad his worn-out servitors
To do his bidding. Pictures, full of shame
And horror, hung upon the walls,
And living images hovered around, —
The demons or the victims of his lust.
O God, if ever a lost soul enstamped
Its image upon living human forms,
If all the fearful hosts of passion's throng
Sought an embodiment in outward mould,
If every foul and loathsome thing on earth
Ever had guise and shape of human life,
Then Llamia had mirrored in his form
Her own soul's hideous deformity.

Slowly, by those degrees that subtle art
Alone can simulate and see fulfilled,
Llamia sought to wind the venom'd chain
Of her desires and those of her foul son,
Round Hesperia's pure and spotless soul;
And when they saw how silent she became,
Answering not their horrid hints, the while
Though uncompliant to their purposes,
They grew encouraged, and believed the vow

Might yet be irrevocably fulfilled.
At last there came a day when Llamia
Sought to accomplish her vile purposes.
She stood beside her young and lovely charge, —
Now ripened into perfect womanhood,
And golden white, like all things free from stain, —
Upon an eminence of golden fame,
O'ercanopied by dome enwrought with stars ;
Fold after fold of scarlet drapery
Fell round their feet, upheld to the high point
Of the bright dome in beak of brazen bird,
Whose talons held the proud and flaming shield
That Llamia had claimed as her own ;
Arrayed in robes of spotless, fleecy white,
Unconscious of the purpose of this fete,
Hesperia stood unheeding the strange scene,
But beamed on the expectant multitude
As pure as unpolluted as a saint.
Admiring murmurs rose upon the air,
While some, conscious of the conspiracy
Of Llamia, whispered condemning her, —
But not aloud. At last the hideous form
Of Llamia's foul son appeared there,
And she with strange and fascinating voice
Allowed the silver ripple of her words
To break over and all around the throng :
“ Dear friends, to fill an unforgotten pledge,
More dear because of the consent and love
Of those who are its subjects, we have come,
To witness its bright consummation here.
The nuptials of these children, dear as life,
And suited by all those high attributes

To bear each other loving company,
Through all the pilgrimage of earthly life.
That you rejoice in this delightful hour,
And that we lay our offerings of love
Upon a shrine of purest joy,
I well believe." — Hesperia arose,
In the full glory of her womanhood.
With calmness like the surface of the sea,
Suppressing all its hidden heaving throes,
She waited till the multitude had spent
The fury of their loud acclaim of joy.
Then in a voice as musical and sweet
As ringing of soft silver vesper-bells,
Yet clear and firm as the deep voice of truth, —
"The words of Llamia are false," she said ;
"No promise holds me. I have made no vow,
Nor given my consent to aught that she
Declares. Sooner than be, or do, or think
The thing she wishes, I will wear the rags
Of endless toil or poverty, or die, —
For death would be the sweetest boon of all.
No part of her, nor of this foulest one
She names her son, can ever other be
Than loathsome to my very thought and sense.
Yet, by my mother's sacred name, and him
Who gave me life, — by all the silent woe
Suffered for years, that I might still obey
Her sweet behest, — by the great wrong ye do,
Who witnessing her death, and my sad life,
Consent and aid in this foul dreadful plot
To rob me of my purity and truth
And the high heritage they left for me, —

For me and you if ye would follow them, —
By these, and highest heaven, I humbly swear
That I from Llamia am ever free ;
And urge you, for your own and for the sake
Of generations that shall come, to leave her now.”
Wildest confusion, scenes of violence,
Followed full fast, and Llamia, with eyes
Glaring like serpents, hissed on her these words, —
“For this thou’lt perish, or go hated, loathed,
Down, down to infamy and endless shame !”
And then she rallied all her flattering hosts,
Who thronging round her with wild shouts and cheers
Urged her to smite the fair bright maiden down.
Hesperia walked fearlessly among
The moving mass that surged and swelled around.
A small devoted band gathered quite near,
The murmuring multitude moved slowly by,
And mid the gathering gloom a loved light,
The glory of a matchless countenance,
Fell on her, hiding her from the dark night.

V.

THE SPELL.

At last Llamia thought of the foul spell,
And even yet believed her subtle power
Could in a measure reach Hesperia.
But when could she behold her? All in vain
Were her most potent powers, unless she
Could fasten upon her those baleful eyes.
She sought her in the highways and the streets,
Proclaiming as she went the maiden’s shame,

And hinting at some horrid mystery
That she could, if she would, reveal,
Branding that fair and spotless loveliness
As wanton, saying, "Thus I sought to save
Her from the tendencies of her own soul
By honorable alliance with my name ;
And now I spurn her, for she is no more
Worthy the honor of so high a place
As the escutcheon of our house would give."
Then madly did the people follow her, —
Llamia, beautiful and winning still,
Holding the populace in her fair thrall,
And alternately swaying with her son
The multitude to long and loud applause.
Once, when she thus went forth, a vestal throng
Of maidens, robed in white, came up the street
Chanting sweet virgin hymns and bearing palms,
Led by a maiden peerless as a queen.
She well could guess no other form could wear
A grace so heavenly, so mild and high ;
And turning as they passed, fastened again
Those wondrous eyes full on the maiden's face.
She paused, her song unsung, turned deadly pale,
And reeling, would have fallen to the ground.
Llamia still chained her with the subtle glance,
And held her safe a captive in her arms.

To faint with famine that no food can fill,
To parch with thirst no cooling drops can quench,
To mark the slow and sluggish life-tides drop
Reluctantly from their stagnated source,
To wander like the weary, waning moon,

O'er the deserted earth, craving no boon
That aught can give ; to feel a void intense,
Insatiable, close round the vestibule
Of the young heart, in which fair hopes had played ;
To feel the weary weight of life a load
Too grievous to be borne, even the robes
Drag heavily about the languid limbs ;
To know that not one sight of loveliness
Can waken a pulsation of sweet joy,
Nor aught of deepest human misery
Disturb the turbid stream of sympathy ;
To crawl an aimless, nameless thing, a worm
Which none would condescend to bruise or crush,
Too utterly forlorn for pity or contempt, —
A death in life, whose horrid sepulchre
Is all the stagnant stifling atmosphere,
And thoughts cling feebly to the flagging brain,
Like torn and tattered sails swung uselessly
Round a lone mast on a deserted sea, —
Such was the spell that Llamia's vile heart
And dread imagination had conjured
To breathe upon her victim ; but instead
She fell into a sleep akin to death,
From which she woke not, gave no sign of breath ;
Yet every feature of her lovely face
Wore its accustomed beauty, and a grace
Of something half divine seemed resting there, —
The lingering halo of the spirit's prayer.
The motionless white limbs were rounded still,
Though the life-tides pulsated silently.
Without they called upon her name in vain ;
She answered not their summons, yet the stain

Of dread decay touched not her perfect form,
And near the heart the surface was quite warm.
Within, the potent powers of the soul
Still held their wonted and supreme control,
Kindling the thought and spirit to a glow,
Till, like a flame out of the drifted snow,
Like a white lily, with its golden cup,
That all the waters and the winds bear up, —
Like a swift butterfly with Iris wings,
That from its sheath of mouldering clay upsprings, —
Like perfume floating upward from the flower,
Bearing sweet music on its wingéd power,
As clouds are lifted to the rising sun,
As the soul rises to the Eternal One, —
Her spirit rose from the cold sleeping clay,
A thing of life and beauty like the day.
Then one supreme and dread omnipotence
Pervaded her, usurping every sense,
Uplifting and enfolding with a love
More mighty than the wings of death to move.
A new sensation full of wondrous power,
Thrilled, filled her being in that charmed hour.
Sandaled with swiftest thought she moved along
To the triumphant measure of a song
That from her own pulsations seemed to float,
E'en as the skylark moves to his own note.
She saw her mountain home, it seemed to be
A portion of herself, as wild as free;
And then, before the thought became a word,
The vibrant atmosphere around was stirred,
And wave on wave of rapture o'er her moved,
Till she stood face to face with those beloved.

The glory of that meeting none could guess, —
As though a traveller through the wilderness
Had, wandering, lost his way and sank in sleep,
While haunting terrors their dread watch did keep
Of conscious, desolate, and drear despair,
And then across his vision shone a fair
Wild dream of happiness, and home and love, —
So now this vision seemed too bright to prove
Reality, but lost in sweet converse
Their spirits mutually did rehearse
The scenes that they had passed since that sad day
When the fell shaft of separation came.

Then the sweet maiden murmured that fond name, —

“Mother and friend, O, I have prayed to be
As thou art. And do the dead thus go free
To mingle 'mid the scenes beloved on earth?
What rapture greater than all joy and mirth
Is it to be beloved, and love once more
Encircled as in happy days of yore !”

“Yes, love,” the mother said, “thought dieth not:
The change that men call death, is but the lot
Of transitory nature, whose vast range
Ever aspires, through paths of constant change,
To higher planes of being ; but the soul
In a vast orbit of its own shall roll,
Divided by matter and mortal breath,
United at the last by shaft of death,
Thou meetest us in spirit, but not yet
Thy lovely mortal temple to forget ;
That sleeping form must be thy dwelling-place,
Our love hath drawn thee thither for a space,
As the sun's rays absorb the crystal rain

Whose pearly drops descend to earth again ;
We could not hold thee from thy destiny,
We would not, for it is of eternity,
Hesperia." "O, 'twere sweet aye to dwell
Conscious of sights and scenes beloved so well ;
Ever to feel your arms around me twine,
Your hearts beat close in unison with mine,
And see from this proud height, as day retires,
The mountain brow all crowned with crimson fires.
The soul of every flower, shrub, and tree,
I can behold sparkling with ecstasy." —

"Yes, it were sweet our converse here to hold,
Till time shall pass and the young world grow old,
But this we cannot ; nor must we delay
The purpose of this strange but blissful stay.
Nor can we fold thee in our loved embrace
To shield thee, but 'tis given us to trace
Thy pathway through the world, and thou mayst see
All thy young feet have passed, what is to be,
For knowing this, will give thy spirit strength
To battle with the stream, whose serpent length
Enwinds itself around thee to destroy ;
And, when the victory is won, what joy
Awaits thee in another dear delight,
Dawns on thy spirit through its earthly night."
Then, on her mental vision swiftly fell
Such scenes as here are traced ; their surging swell
Was like the billows of the ocean's breast, —
First bursting white, sinking to green blue rest,
They rose and fell : whether she saw or heard,
Or felt each scene, or the slow spoken word
Of fate was woven into woof of song

By poet Calios, does not belong
To this dull page to know. The fragments came
Like star-flakes, or like broken films of flame,
Varied and manifold as heaven's rays :
Now full of splendor as the summer days,
Now full of darkness as the night of woe,
Just as her light shone bright or dim below ;
Sometimes 'twas like the song by seraphs sung
In heaven when the hills and valleys rung
With loud acclaim of her sweet loveliness ;
Then 'twas the bitter bread of deep distress.
But over all a calm, intense, serene,
Shone through her spirit, as though she had seen
All that the world can give of its despair,
And waited for the joy to crown her there.

PART IV.
CRESCENTIA.

Dedicated to

FREDERICK DOUGLASS,

CHAMPION OF FREEDOM, AND TO THE SOUTHERN LOYALISTS.

CRESCENTIA.

I.

UNDER a blue and purpled dome of skies,
As clear as sapphire walks of paradise,
Lighted with lingering rays of tropic moons,
Whose golden gondolas meet the lagoons,
And stars, as tender as the eyes of love,
Look down in living splendor from above,
The torrent of a mighty river pours
Its flood of waters over the low shores,
Save where, resisted by the strong levee,
The tide is pressed far out into the sea,
Bearing the debris of a thousand streams,—
Its turbid waters with the ocean gleams :
The low land stretches in far slopes away,
Or girds with highlands the translucent bay.
Bayous like streets of liquid ebony
O'erarched by solemn pine and cypress tree,
Or that rare live-oak, wondrously hung
With trailing mosses, like gray tresses flung
From a young maiden's brow ; those dim dark aisles
Within whose recesses the sun ne'er smiles,
Like old cathedral vaults o'ergrown with moss
Whose doorway not one ray of light can cross, —
But sacred for its silence and its prayer,
The ghostly anthems ever chanted there —

Those twilight forests haunted by the wind
Or snatch of prayer from the earth's dreaming mind.
Obedient to nature's kindly call,
Beauty perennial reigns o'er all ;
Unfading verdure greets the eye of morn,
Unfailing loveliness the fields adorn ;
From silent and impenetrable bowers
Float wingéd perfumes of wondrous flowers ;
Proud trees their branches, like rich censers, fling
Freighted with vestal odors of the spring ;
White bridal blossoms whisper of their loves
Amid the golden fruit of orange groves ;
Graceful the tall acacia and fair,
Loosens her blooms like curls of golden hair ;
Magnolia, majestic maiden queen,
Arrayed in regal robes of royal green,
Bearing within her cup of waxen snow
Ambrosial dews, only the gods can know ;
Rings out the pomegranate's scarlet bell, —
The golden promise of its fruit to tell ;
Silver lime flowers pierce the atmosphere
With music perfumes delicately clear ;
Filling and killing all the ravished sense,
Pale starry jasmine pours passion intense ;
From the fair heaven of her paradise,
The lily queen salutes the bending skies ;
Wild grape-vines, flowering parasites, all press
Their tiny tendrils through the wilderness ;
Rare birds, like wingéd flowers, float along, —
Like blossoms odorless they have no song ;
But flitting from bower to bower is heard
The witching warblings of the mocking-bird ;

And when each sight and sound of day is done,
Peerless, the nightingale sings all alone :
But if nature hath lavished all her charms
Beneath these fairest skies, if the sun warms
Her beauty into shapes of loveliness
Elsewhere unknown, here too the fearful stress
Of compensation holds an equal sway ;
For hiding, lurking in each lovely bay,
Breathing contagion on the summer air,
The dread miasma hovers everywhere.
Huge reptiles and unlovely serpents start
From marsh and bayou with their venom'd dart ;
Minute but poisonous insects hidden hold
High carnival amid those fields of gold.
Oppressive atmospheres sicken the sense
With heated fever-fires of violence ;
The poison passions, unhallowed desires,
Consume with their wild and unlawful fires ;
Crimes, rank and noxious, spring to sudden birth,
Too horrible for other climes of earth ;
And a low mist of moral pestilence
Breeds spawn of venom'd reptiles, recompense
For all the beauty of this wondrous place,
Veiling corruption with a lovely face.

Crescentia, thou fairest foulest one,
Of all whom Llamia has called her own, —
Named for the starry vestal queen of night,
No wonder at the thought that in her height
Dian turned pale for that great nameless wrong,
Reeling and blind and mad her stars among, —
As like to her art thou, as is the slime

To the clear crystal fountain in its prime ;
Or as the serpent to the snowy dove,
As all things loathsome to the things we love,
As night to day, as woe to sweetest bliss,
As sting of envy to the lover's kiss ;
Despair to joy, winter to vernal spring,
The dust of earth to shining stars that swing
In space, as desolate decay to life,
As forces opposite, whose ceaseless strife
Keeps heaven afar, as Satan unto God ;—
I know not but thy poisoned feet have trod
The darkened paths of infamy and shame,
Till thou hast learned no sacred, lovely name.
Perchance thy robes, so stained with sin and gore,
Never were stainless ; never went before
Thy vision dreams of innocence and peace
To bring even a wish for a release ;
Perchance the stifled air was tainted so
With moral miasma and human woe,
Or from thy birth, and e'er thou saw the day,
The chains were fastened to thee that held sway
Over thy being, by thy mother's sin,
That thou unconsciously didst enter in
To the great whirlpool of thy destiny,
Driven by ruling demons like to thee.
If so, O mother nations, pray to be
Barren : if beauteous babes can never see
The light, the smile of God's paternity.
From out thy foul rank being bursts a form
Fair as the light that greets the eye of morn,
As the white water-lily meets the light,
Lifting its golden chalice through the night

Until, all radiant with life and love,
 Its loveliness doth the dark waters move.
 This one, unconscious of thy sin and shame,
 Through thy dark being broke, a beauteous flame,
 As beautiful as dream of love and youth,
 The image bright of harmony and truth ;
 As radiant as Morning when she springs,
 And o'er the eastern hills her glory flings.
 He loved all things beneath the bending sky,
 The forests, and the tempest sweeping by,
 The insect, and the birds for their grand flight ;
 He loved the day for work, for rest the night ;
 Loving all beings fortunate and free,
 But chiefly those enslaved and cursed by thee.
 He saw in these the image of high God.
 Glad, joyous, free, the radiant world he trod,
 But upon thee and Llamia he spoke
 One curse that all the wondering echoes woke.

II.

ANATHEMA.

"Upon this land so fair, so deadly fair,
 These living waves of emeraldine light,
 Whose bloom and fragrance fill with ecstasy
 The deep voluptuous swells of atmospheres,
 Until they pant with painful pleasure strokes,—
 Curses.

"Upon these groves, each hiding some rare joy,
 This wondrous wilderness beyond compare,

Masking with beauty bright as paradise
The deadly desolating shafts of death, —
Curses.

“Upon these broad, brown, cultivated fields,
Enriched by drops of human agony,
Those acres sown and harvested for thee,
By these whom cruel tortures rob of joy, —
Curses.

“On thee, Crescentia, fair harlot-queen,
Whose dazzling beauty none the less conceals
The moral pestilence within thy breast,
Polluting everything thou gazest on, —
Curses.

“Whose splendid river robes are trailed in slime,
The offal of thy charnel-house of shame,
Never can the pure drops by heaven distilled
Wash from thy garments thy foul being's stain, —
Curses.

“Nor the avenger's sacrificial flame,
Nor retribution's fiery flaming hand,
Nor aught save dread annihilation's breath
Wipe from the world so foul a thing as thou, —
Curses.

“And thou, Llamia, whose incestuous heart
Bred all those sister serpents in thy sin,
Whose father is their brother and thy son,
On thee and him, forever, evermore, —
Curses.”

III.

MARGARET.

I.

Fair, fair as 'the dawn Crescentia lay,
In her regal robes like queenly May ;
 With her jeweled hands
 And her river bands,
Like a crescent crown on her forehead set,
While near in her woe sat Margaret.

II.

Bright, bright as the sun Crescentia lay,
With her blazing crown like the crown of day,
 With her eyes of fire,
 Flashing fierce desire,
And the heart in which all fierce passions met, —
But hope there was none for Margaret.

III.

Red, red as the dawn Crescentia lay,
Red with rays of the rising king of day ;
 Red her scarlet lips,
 Red her finger-tips,
And the dew on her cheek were with red blood wet,
And pallid and wan was poor Margaret.

IV.

Dark, dark was the den where Crescentia lay,
And darker her purpose to kill and betray.

Dark, dark was her soul
With its black control ;
While the foul hosts of Hades her horrors abet, —
Alas! would no aid come to poor Margaret?

V.

Foul, foul were her robes as Crescentia lay,
All stained with the blood and tears of dismay,
With life-blood and fears
And tortures of years,
All wrung from the hearts that can never forget,
And foul with the wrongs brought to poor Margaret.

VI.

Gory red the place where Crescentia lay,
And the stagnant air with death-vapors did play ;
And her heart of stone
Heard each stifled moan
That was wafted o'er tower and tall minaret,
The moaning of thousands and poor Margaret.

VII.

Thus fair and thus foul Crescentia lay
In her scarlet robes of sin on that day,
With her gory hands,
And her iron bands
On the neck of a race all firmly set,
On these and poor stricken Margaret.

VIII.

Wrapped in folds of flame Crescentia lay ;
In her madness she kindled the fires that day,

But the voice of fate
Made her pause too late,
And up from the gulf the white sails were set, —
There was hope in their speed for poor Margaret.

IX.

And the ships swept up where Crescentia lay,
With a motion and might no hand could stay ;
And a fearless band,
With an iron hand,
Dared to raise upon tower and tall minaret
The banner of freedom o'er poor Margaret.

X.

Then she passed the spot where Crescentia lay ;
Fled with fleetest feet on her fearful way,
To the noble man
With a mighty plan,
Saying, "Sire, on my honor a price is set ;
'Tis my father pursues me, O save Margaret!"

XI.

Out looked the stern man where Crescentia lay,
A vision came o'er him of one far away,
Of a fair home afar,
A bright morning star,
The beautiful gem in his life coronet set, —
And he tenderly lifted the pale Margaret.

XII.

"Dost see o'er the spot where Crescentia lay
A banner of beauty doth flutter and play?"

By its blue, white, and red,
By our nation's fair dead,
By the mother who bore me and blesses me yet,
I swear I will save thee, thou brave Margaret."

PART V.
ATHENIA.



Dedicated to
WENDELL PHILLIPS,
THE FRIEND OF HUMANITY AND THE MASTER OF ELOQUENCE.



ATHENIA.

I.

WHERE northern skies are blue with turquoise
light,
And seas are opalescent in their glow,
A broad expanse of waters, pearly pale,
Is held, in close yet varying embrace,
Between two rugged arms of rocky coast.
One stretches, sloping, to the east and north,
Winding among rare bays and harbors calm,
Or suddenly, precipitately, turns
On bold and barren cliffs, where fearful chasms
Repeat the echoes of the sounding sea,
Until, from a sharp point of the low shore,
Its fingers loosen on the sandy slope
Laden with emeralds sink 'neath the waves :
The other winds in semi-crescent curves,
First south, then east, in a long, lingering line,
Between low shores of shining, singing sands,
With here and there a rocky point or two,
All crowned by a range of sandy hills
So bleak and barren that the stunted pines
And mosses meagre sustenance can find ;
But when the summer ether gives its blue
To the bright waves, the sun his splendid light
To the glad earth and crisp, tumultuous sea,

When waves of perfumed air from the warm south
Sweep up to greet the eager longing lips
Of sleeping flowers, the bare and barren hills
Are filled in all their void interstices
With lovely vines and flowering parasites ;
Each bay and narrow inlet leads the way
To some retreat, 'mid sheltering rocks and trees,
Where nature smiles in sweetest loveliness,
Unbinding her fair beauties to the sun,
Whose kisses warm to life the dreaming flowers,—
Pied wind-flowers and the wild columbine
And many meek-eyed humble violet :
Here crystal streams from their life-giving springs
Murmur most musically ; sleeping lakes
Upbear the water-lily's trembling cup,
Until its white and golden chalice is o'erflowed
With nectar dews distilled in paradise.
Within this marvelous and lovely bay
The pale clear waters image the blue sky
In crystalline completeness, interspersed
With rocky islands desolate and lone :
Like exiles, unrepentant, banished hence
By the stern mother coast for grievous crimes,
They stand in solemn, stately solitude,
While waves and winds and seasons sweep along.
But chiefest for its charm and sacredness,
Is one lone rock upon the southern arm
Of this wild, winding, undulating coast.
It is the haunt of circling memories,
The home of ocean sirens, and the nymphs
That haunt the grottoes in the caves beneath ;
And these, arrayed in white and green of waves

And spray, entwine their sinuous, soft limbs
In wondrous harmony to their wild songs,
Hurting their white feet ever 'gainst its sides
Yet ever singing in its solemn praise ;
Here, too, the winds, their brothers, all attend
Mingling their voices in an anthem deep
Of blended praise and joyous revelry,
Chanting the hymns of Orpheus divine.
Far out to sea the mariner can hear
Their music beating 'gainst this giant rock,
And his pulse lightens as its throbbings join
In deep refrain that sacred symphony :
Or as the ships come sweeping grandly in,
Freighted with burdens from the bursting hearts
Of many mighty mother nations far,
Bearing the exiles of a thousand lands,
The booming cannon thunders forth its praise.
The pilot points with silent awe and pride
To this rude rock ; the stranger feels his feet
Glow with desire to press the bare brown breast.
The downcast and oppressed of every clime
Hear the song swelling o'er the waste of waves
And all their burdens bear with hopeful hearts ;
The captives feel their fetters fall, ah me !
But who shall guess what other sounds shall come
Of woe and desolation near its shrine.

II.

HYMN TO THE ROCK OF PILGRIMS.

Proud Rock of Pilgrims, ever round thy form
Sweep surging billows, spirits of the storm ;

The wild, wide waves beat 'gainst thy burdened breast,
Torturing their fair bosoms with unrest ;

The wingéd winds waft to thee from each clime
The meaning of a message all sublime ;

But thou, immovable, standest alone,
Unmindful of the winds' and waters' moan, —

Because within thy bare and barren breast
The beatings of a mighty soul are prest.

The fair, faint feet of Freedom first there trod
And found a fitting altar for her God ;

Because strange fires burn there with a new light,
Promethean, a flame in darkest night ;

Because, anew, the love of Truth and Faith
Were rescued from a dark and dreary death ;

Because all nations 'neath the sun might gaze
Upon thee from their dim and distant maze

Of tyranny and wrong, and say, "Behold !
There is a miracle of love untold ;

"Truth's ripened fruit doth grow, and God is God,
Far o'er the seas where Freedom's feet have trod ;"

Because through all the silent, startled years,
Amid great sorrows, wrongs, tortures, and tears,

Thy light was quenched not, but was all aglow
With flashing flames that from Truth's altar flow.

Because through mouths grown sad with sin and shame,
When crimes were wrought in Liberty's sweet name,

And in Religion's, she too, sad and wan,
Gazed through her tears thy glowing light upon ;

Because across this lingering lapse of woe,
Slavery's wrongs, war's bitter, bloody throe,

Thy name, held sacred for the seed once sown
Upon thy bosom, for the fruit once grown ;

Ripened from blood and tears that fell on thee,
Shall golden grow again for Liberty.

O, rock of Freedom! destined e'er to be
A light to guide man to Eternity, —

A hint of that unknown and nameless shore,
Round which the Stygian waters evermore

Beat with the burdened billows of the souls
That seek a portal to those higher goals, —

Forever and forever shall the sea
And winds, all intertwined, sweep over thee ;

Forever and forever shall thy fires
Consume all sordid, worldly, low desires ;

Forever and forever shall God's hand
Uphold thee, and through thee this sacred land.

III.

Within the inmost harbor of this bay,
Where ocean's green is blue and blue is gray,
And gray is pearly, opalescent white,
Like sheen of silver clouds, like the moon's light
'Mid clustering gem isles, with wild waves wet,
The fairest gem, Athenia, is set:
Pearl sea-spray broidered is her flowing dress,
Like ice cascades in the deep wilderness, —
Hinting of summer music prisoned there,
Of beauty hidden to become more fair.
The belt of waters girdling her bright zone
Conceals rare splendors brighter than heaven's own;
Fold upon fold of crisp and sparkling air
Fasten and fix her form in shapes more fair;
Those bare and barren, unmaternal breasts
Hiding their love, whose slumbering sweetness rests
Waiting in silent, sombre maiden mood,
The joy or curse of matchless motherhood.
Impatient Enterprise, Necessity,
And Culture, thy handmaidens be,
Plucking the priceless pearls of every zone
To crown thy brow withal and call thine own;
So cold, so fair, so seeming pure art thou, —
Thou maiden city with the snowy brow,
Thou triune-breasted goddess of the north,
Whence all the frosted fires of fame go forth, —
I'd name thee Dian, for thou art as fair,
Wert thou as pure, as radiant, and rare;

Or were thy vows sincere, thy life would shine
Like her of sweetest ways, St. Catherine ;
The Muses sing to thee, Cecilia sweet
Pours plaintive melodies around thy feet ;
The Graces win thee, and their praises lure
Stern stoic sages — O wert thou as pure !
Too high for passion and too cold for love,
Standing midway between the earth and Jove,
I name thee, glorious goddess of the wise,
Minerva — no, her hand, though strong in wars,
Binds no bruised soul beneath her burnished bars ;
Now for thy loveliness and thy great name
I'd seek to shield thee from all sin and shame ;
Swear thou art true and high and free from stain,
But for the panting pulses, full of pain,
Stung to the quick, corroded by dull care,
Ground to their graves, to keep thee young and fair.
Thou maiden of the splendid starlit eye,
I'll tell thee what thou art although I die :
Chaste, yes if it be chastity to wear
Sin's wages and no mark of sinning bear ;
Religious, if religion be the law
By which to measure every feeble flaw
In a poor brother's eye, forgetting, too,
That sins may sometimes shade our own eyes through—
Or if religion be the narrow gauge
To measure finite sins with God's great rage,
And send the poor presumptuous zealot thence
Who dares believe in Love's omnipotence ;
Virtuous, if virtue hold her white robes
Away from whence the deadly dagger probes
The hearts of men to see if they are pure,

Though other virtue might e'en these endure ;
Kind, if the flattering, smooth, proffered word,
Grudgingly spoken, be by kindness stirred ;
And generous and just, — if these things be
A compromise 'twixt polished grace and thee,
By which to lengthen those fair tongues of praise,
And fill with adulation all thy days ;
Charity — O I mark the splendid line
Of places wherein thy virtues shine
With rich endowment by thy favor given,
The paven street leading from thee to heaven.
I dare accuse thee, Athenia, thou
With robes untarnished and high regal brow,
Of bearing in thy breast Llamia's blame,
Of sharing in Crescentia's deep shame ;
Kindling the fires to quench the living breath
Of martyrs, hastening them to dismal death ;
Of proudly plotting perjury and pains
To heap the hoarded stores of greedy gains, —
Of masking from the searching eye of light
The deeds grown baleful in fair Heaven's sight :
Nay, once I saw thee when the summer sea
Was vibrant with the breath of harmony, —
When sky met wave, and waves met at thy feet,
Bringing all ravishment of bliss complete, —
When the o'erhanging day was all divine,
Its beauty merging melting into thine,
The sky, the earth, the sea all wrapt in thee,
As blends the soul with the Eternity ;
Upon thy shining palace domes it shone,
Thy spires and turrets pierced to Heaven's throne ;
Thy bosom hills lay warm beneath the sun,

Blending their threefold splendors into one.
A hush was on thee, was it righteousness,
Or that dread calm, the sullen, sad portense
Doomed cities, waiting for the earthquake's breath,
Feel ere their lips close hard on those of death?
A fate hung o'er thee ; on thy garment's hem
Hung tremulously each sea island gem ;
'Thy robes clung loosely like the useless sails
Round the ship's masts, when the wind's favor fails ;
Languid thy limbs, and brown, broad bosom bare ;
Thy parted lips sucked in the freighted air ;
And when night came with its o'erhanging gloom,
It seemed to usher in thy final doom.

IV.

THE FUGITIVE.

I.

Hushed, hushed was the muffled tramp of feet,
Hurried yet stifled on the street.
 No murmurings loud
 From that small, close crowd ;
They moved with a purpose ne'er felt before,
In a mighty mass to yon prison door.

II.

Three days and nights had thy minions held
A human spirit all free from crime,
 Having nothing done
 Under all the sun,

But seek thy fair face and Liberty,
And be numbered among thy sons as free.

III.

Three days and thy arméd host have wrung
His heart from the hope where his spirit clung,
 'Till it wasted and died
 In its pain and pride :
The sweat of his agony did pour
To the depths of hell from that prison door.

IV.

Three days, and Llamia's children lent
Her slaves to succor thy dread intent,
 And the demons came,
 In thy lovely name ;
But to-night will the bondman's feet go free,
Or a gulf will open twixt heaven and thee.

V.

On, on through the narrow, noiseless street ;
'Tis a moment's work, then, with fleetest feet
 Shall his steed away,
 Leaving Freedom to say,
"There are men whom the gods have suffered to be
So high that they scorn even error and thee."

VI.

'Tis the work of an instant ; through court-yard and square,
Shoulder to shoulder, no moment to spare :
 Where's the axe and stone ?
 Is the brave deed done ?

O misery ! where was the perfect plan
Linking deeds with the thought that would rescue a man ?

VII.

There were men mighty enough to move
A nation to goodness, thy cold heart to love ;
 There were clear, calm eyes,
 Like the crystal skies ;
There were lips as firm as the lips of death,
Hearts that could never swerve in their latest breath.

VIII.

But alas ! firm looks could not serve their hands,
Their hearts were strong but stronger the bands
 Of the minions of might,
 Sweeping up left and right, —
‘Till the brave group were scattered, the rescue not won,
With nothing to cheer them but good deeds undone.

IX.

Back, back to the chains, the scourge, and the lash,
The victim was hurried ; ‘mid glitter and flash
 Were the murmurings heard
 Of God’s unspoken word :
“For this, Athenia, and thy years of sin,
The full vengeance of justice thou surely shall win.

X.

“Thy people shall curse thee, thy maidens despise,
And mothers shall moan with their pitiful eyes ;
 Thy sons shall be slain
 To wipe this foul stain,

Thy dread crimes shall haunt thee like ghosts through
years,
'Till thy sins are washed in thy penitent tears."

V.

I see thee in thy young and tender years,
Cradled in battles, fed on doubts and fears,
Nurtured in fiery flames of Liberty,
Sucking her red-hot milk to make thee free ;
Thee and thy sister cities circling nigh,
Like groups of stars in constellated sky,
All nurtured and sustained by one supreme
And dread desire, — Freedom's eternal dream.
I see the starry few, whose names are traced
On thy first tablets by no sin defaced,
The founders of thy temple Liberty,
Protectors of thy spotless chastity.
Him let the whiteness of thy beauties praise
Who guided thee in pure and perfect ways ;
And him who planted seeds of sacred worth,
Unsoiled, untarnished by a stain of earth ;
And they, the dauntless few, who valiant stood
Defending thee, their hearts all just and good.
Whate'er of immortality is thine,
Is borrowed from their splendor that doth shine
Bright as the day through the dim waste of years,
Uplifting thee from all thy groveling fears ;
But for those lion lips of liquid flame
First tasting Freedom's breath and lastly Fame,
Fallen, like Eden's morning Lucifer,
Brighter than thee, Athenia, his glory were,

But like to thee, thy brother and thy son,
Thy sin and his were deeply, darkly won.
One was there whose high spirit scattered words,
Sun bright as truth and cutting as sharp swords,
Who hurled thy deeds back in thy burning face
And dared to name a name for thy disgrace ;
Who planted vineyards where the slave had trod,
To yield their purple heritage up to God.
And one who stood as firm in his high state,
Calm-eyed as justice, unyielding as fate,
Judging with judgments borrowed from God's throne ;
Not for thy foul sins would Heaven disown
One spirit nerved within this common clay,
But would uplift and save it on God's day ; —
And they, the younger sons of Liberty,
Who spurned thy sin fleeing afar from thee,
To plant the seeds of Freedom on a soil
Where through great trials and abundant toil
They yielded harvests to the reaper's hand,
And crowned with glory that fair western land.
I'd name them all, but rather, out of sight,
Up in the purer air of God's white light
I'd leave them, risen each to his own place,
Meeting his deeds and words there face to face, —
Each grown accustomed to his thought and thine,
Reconciled, cut off from all words like mine,
From praise or blame, since now each soul confessed
Stands in its nakedness, or whitely dressed
By its white thought, clothed like the lily sweet,
In flowing lightness round its form and feet ;
Or naked and aghast wears robes of woe
For deeds undone and errors worn below, —

I'd leave them bearing only the one word,
That beateth downward like a diving bird,
Fluttering, falling, filling all the way
With somewhat that their souls, silent, can say :—

“ For all the living that are named dead,
And for the dead possessing life instead ;
For good sweet things hidden, kept out of sight,
And loathsome things that daily greet the light ;
For loves unliv'd and souls unsatisfied,
And lusts o'erliv'd and pampered petted pride ;
For deeds undone, but dreamed in a dark day,
And evil things that held their potent sway ;
For songs unsung, fair pictures put aside,
To turn a jest or point of pique and pride ;
For germs unquickened, sleeping soft and low
Till rank weeds have their time to grow and blow ;
For wings unfledged, spirits stretching for flight,
While bats and ravens cleave the dismal night, —
For those, and all things unreconciled,
Concealed, withheld from every mortal child,
Folded in mystery or greater love,
Sleeping and silent like an unfledged dove.
We say, living whom ye have named dead,
We name them dead who walk the earth instead.
And of the former things, they live and are
Set up in heaven, like a sun or star ;
And of the latter, they have never been ;
They are as things undreamed of and unseen ;
Only the perfect thought endures for aye,
All else has never been, for it could die.”

VI.

A silver bird singing a silver song,
Soaring and singing all the hills among ;
Melting in melodies of matchless measure,
Until the panting air is pained with pleasure ;
Scattering silver snow-flakes as he sings,
Wreathing with wonders his wide-spreading wings ;
Piercing and penetrating the pure air
With diamond darts as clear as truth and fair ;
Now moving mightily as the winds move,
Now softly singing like the snowy dove,
Now circling all the hills and valleys o'er,
His liquid lightning-shafts of song to pour,
Or, surging with the swelling, heaving sea,
Dashing its waves around and over thee ;
Matchless in motion as the moving years,
Matchless in harmony as songs of spheres ;
White like the snow-drifts or the white of heat,
Red with the morning's red, and with the glow
Of floods and fires and human tides that flow ;
Red with the flush of youth and sunset rays
Kindling and gleaming o'er the charmed days ;
Patient and pale with pain, but not afraid,
Dauntless and daring, free and undismayed ;
Absorbing and consuming grosser sense
With his own soul the soul of Eloquence.

Athenia, forgotten and forgiven
Thy sins, because the earth is less than heaven ;
As light absorbs and swallows up the night,
Putting the phantom darkness to swift flight ;

As days absorb the hours, and the months days,
And years usurp the moon's uncertain ways, —
Ages supplant the years and God the whole,
Making all useful 'neath His great control ;
Washed by the waves of the encircling sea
All sins of thine that are, or are to be, —
As Magdalens are by the Master made
Pure, spotless, free, forgiven, unafraid, —
Washed by waves of the encircling air,
Thy spirit shall become all bright and fair.
Once more shall thy sweet maiden ways return,
Again thy vestal altar-fires shall burn ;
The gems of pearl and emerald of sea
Shall clasp and crown and cover only thee ;
The crown of stars and turquois skies shall bend
Above thy brow and with thy beauty blend ;
Thy silver singing-bird shall build his nest
Within thy purified and stainless breast,
Until, transfigured and together set,
Ye twain are one in Freedom's coronet.

BOOK II.
O U I N A .



To the Memory of

MOKETAVATA,

“THE SIR PHILIP SIDNEY OF THE WEST.”

PRELUDE.

'T WAS midsummer, an hour before the dawn,
In the vast wilderness ;
Unbroken, save by those familiar forms
Which ever closely press
To nature's bosom lovingly, while she,
Robed in richest undress,
Waited with veiled lids, most longingly
For the sun's beaming eye ;
And vaulted silence, like a temple dome,
Filled all the bended sky.

Each atom of the earth inanimate,
Each grain of shining sand,
Each inorganic molecule ; every germ
Struggling to burst the band
Of nothingness ; each rock and hill,
Each rugged, ragged chasm,
Each mountain, mighty upheaval
Of earthquake's awful spasm ;
Each serpent-fibre of each root and leaf,
Trembling on shrub and tree ;
Each blade of grass, each bursting bud and flower,
Holding in mystery
The honey dew within its silent cell ;
Each crystal drop of every mountain stream,
Of river, lake, and sea ;

Each mote basking anear the charméd light
 Of the glow-worm golden ;
Each insect fluttering in brief delight,
 With perfumed mists enfolden ;
Each bird, breathless with panting, beating breast,
 And notes all quivering
Within its downy song-encircled throat,
 And eager wondrous wing ;
Each beast and every creeping crawling thing,
 And all forms animate ;
The deep pulsations of the silent air
 With God's breath incarnate ;
Each one and all with the profoundest prayer,
 Voices of throbbing, — all
Felt the unconscious spell of potency
 In nature's perfect call ;
And each and all expectant as chaos
 In that great awful night,
Prepared again for the great miracle
 Of life, — "Let there be light."

PART I.

I.

SHENANDOAH.

A WISE and splendid forest king here reigned,
And ruled supreme and mild ;
Untaught in all the crimes that art can boast,
But, as a trusting child,
Reading the laws of nature's book aright,
He ruled by edicts kind,
Leading his people by his strength and skill
And gentleness combined.
He was a type of all that manliness
With which nature endows
Her eldest sons. His form was lithe and tall
As the proud pine-tree's height ;
Erect and firm he stood among his kind
With gentleness and might.
His courage was undaunted, and his skill
At arms or in the chase,
In counsel and in all their communings,
Had won for him this place.
He was a sire, a parent, a wise patriarch,
And they, his children all,
Obedient as the forest leaves to the sweet breath
Of summer's early call.

One spirit breathed in them and in all forms, —
They were a part of each.
His beaming eye by day lighted the world ;
And far beyond their reach
The spirits of their kin kindled their fires
Upon the plains of night,
And over all one vast supreme control
Guided their steps aright.
His manitou they heard in all the sounds,
From thunder's deepest moan
To the sweet sighing of the summer breeze
Or night-bird's mournful tone ;
They saw His form in every shape that lives, —
From the blue bending sky,
With its broad belt of golden flashing stars,
To the winged butterfly.
Heard, saw, and felt, nor sought to know
The monstrous lies of faith,
But with a love and trust surpassing all
They feared nor life nor death.
O, could we see with their glad eyes, and hear
With undiscordant ears,
Their patience, gentleness, and truth
Would mock our idle fears.

II.

OUINA.

Thus lived he, blessed and beloved by all
On whom his wisdom shone,
But chiefly blessed by one rare being bright,
Who lived for him alone.

For him unfolded day by day a sweet
And beautiful wild flower ;
Beautiful, is the snow-white lily fair
Bending above the stream,
Or the bright swan upon the crested wave,
Or the moon's silver beam ?
Is the light fawn graceful, gentle, and kind
Or the wild warbler free ?
Is morning lovely, tripping o'er the hills
With all her witchery,
Her wealth of starry flowers strewing the plain,
Her golden flowing hair ?
Or evening, with her dark and braided locks,
And crown of jewels rare ?
More beautiful was she than all the shapes
Beneath the bending sky ;
More beautiful than all the thoughts of heaven
To the proud chieftain's eye.
One shadow hovered ever round his way,
And brooded o'er his heart,
Haunting his footsteps, like a spectre grim,
Refusing to depart, —
The memory of a grief so strange and wild
In its deep mystery,
It seemed the echo of some mournful dream,
Or taunting memory.
His child, his daughter, pure as any pearl,
Was thus to his heart given.

CLIONA.

He wandered with his people near the sea,
Some hundred leagues or more,

To pay the distant subjects of his tribe
A visit, on the shore
To gather birds and fish for sustenance,
Until their winter's store
Should fill the forest dark and wild
With game as erst before.
A strange canoe, or bird with snowy wing,
Was seen far out at sea ;
None knew its name, indeed, it seemed a thing
Made in eternity, —
A manitou of might sent from above,
By the all-potent Mind ;
But as it neared the shore they saw strange forms,
Beings of their own kind.
That night the wingéd spirit of the storm,
With all its power free,
Swept o'er the land its grand majestic form,
And lashed to foam the sea.
The sail was seen no more, the beings strange,
Their land and clime unknown,
Went down. One woman, sweet, lovely, and mild,
Who, wrecked, bereft, alone,
Rose from her death-like swoon and cold sea-bed
Of billows undefiled,
To consciousness of nameless misery, —
Perchance a fate more wild.
She was a captive, rescued from dark death,
To darker dawn of day.
Not one of all the fated crew were saved ;
She fain their company
Would bear across the Stygian wave,
Alas, it could not be !

The chief beheld her wondrous loveliness,
Resolved her love to win,
Treating her with the utmost gentleness,
As though among her kin :
First sending women to attend her wants,
And bring such sweet relief
As silent sympathy can only give
To those in deepest grief.
Her dark eyes, heavy with their load of tears,
Drooped their long lashes down, —
The curtains that obscured the outward woe
And robbed grief of its frown.
Her long dark hair was braided like a crown,
To bind her snowy brow,
By her new friends. At last, by slow degrees,
She cast aside her woe ;
Learned of their customs, and their language spoke
In accents sweet and low ;
Putting her loneliness slowly afar,
As morning mists arise
Up from the earth with snowy mist-like wings,
To nestle in the skies.
A shadow of its presence filled her eye,
And o'er her lovely face
Lent a sweet charm ; she gave to their wild life
Her own bright nameless grace.
Then by such noble gifts as one might bring
To proudest earthly queen,
The chieftain brought each morn his offering,
Nor sought his love to screen :
Rich gifts of robes of softest, snowy skins,
Enwrought with wondrous art ;

Small moccasins to fit her dainty feet,
Amulets for her heart,
Sacred to save her life from harm or pain ;
And all the plumes of birds
Of richest dyes, whose notes had power to charm,
Sweeter than sweetest words.
At last she smiled on him as though her life
Had a sealed book become
Which only death could break. He, joyous, bore
Her proudly to his home.
She never told the story of her life,
Nor spoke of home or kin,
But seemed content to share his simple lodge,
And all his people win
To some serene and perfect communion —
The councils of the good.
His nature to her art was wedded thus,
Perfect, not understood.
One full round harvest-moon their lives thus sped, —
She with her gentle ways,
Teaching the women those mysterious arts
She learned in early days :
To fashion garments, to prepare the food,
To keep their wigwams clean, —
But not her language ; no, that was her own ;
And at the hour serene
Of twilight, to the margin of the stream
Anear she soft would go
And chant a song of wondrous melody,
In accents sobbing low ;
Then with her tearful face enwreathed in smiles,
As though an angel came,

Among the people she appeared again,
All beautiful the same.
One full round harvest-moon they lived and loved, —
For nature still is kind, —
She loved the untaught forester with all
Her spirit and her mind.
At last into their silent wigwam came
A pale, sad, stranger-guest,
Came uninvited, unforbidden there,
And touched her with white rest ;
Bearing her spirit to her own bright heaven,
Or that fair hunting-ground
Where nature's children meet again their kin.
Sweet rest her pure soul found ;
Rest for her form beneath the violet sod,
Where, by her last request,
A simple cross above the mound was placed
And wild flowers on her breast.
The babe was left, O, sweetest recompense, —
For death He giveth birth !
The rose must fade, but ever a new germ
Unfolds from the warm earth.

OUINA.

III.

CHILDHOOD.

The morning twilight, tinting all the sky
With roseate tracery,
Strewing the earth with starry dew-eyed flowers
And with rare gems the sea ;

The vernal breath of spring, the first wild flower,
The drift of orchard blooms,
The bursting of the violet above
The grassy mouldy tomb ;
The chirping of young birds, the wood-thrush's rare
And wondrously wild note,
The warblings and the choral carolings
From each song-girdled throat ;
The fragrant breath of herds, the gamboling
Of white lambs on the hills ;
The magic in the music murmuring
Of many mountain rills, —
The first faint prelude to an anthem grand
Or matchless symphony :
Like these, and all vibrations sweet
Of witching melody ;
Like bursting buds of joy within the breast
Blooming into a smile ;
Like thoughts of love ere they became a form
All sorrow to beguile ;
Like tremblings of the soul, imprisoned here
Within the bars of sense,
Longing to burst from out the darkened cells
And find its recompense :
O, happy childhood ! when the tender palms
Of eager, willing feet
Press all the paths of life most joyously,
Treading the daisies sweet.
When infant lips suck the warm milk of life
From nature's bounteous breast ;
And when low breathing, softest lullabies
Hush them to sweetest rest.


When every morning wakes the world anew
 To glad and sweet surprise,
And every short-lived, shadowed, fleeting grief
 In rosy slumber dies :
Happy if lured by the sweet ravishment
 Of the long summer hours,
Drinking the nectar of her cool content,
 Within the sheltered bowers.
Ouina bright flitted like any bird
 The vernal trees among,
Luring each songster from his cool retreat
 With her wild witching song ;
Her clear voice winning with its mimicry
 Responses far and near,
Until her people wondered which wild song
 Was hers, which was most clear.
Lighter than the swift antelope her step,
 As the wild hare as fleet,
She touched the moss and flowers caressingly
 With tiny tender feet.
Her bended bow was like the crescent moon,
 Sending her arrow keen
Far toward the sun, but never to destroy,
 Only to mount serene
And then return triumphant to her feet.
 Her light birchen canoe
Floated like the wild swan beneath her touch,
 And o'er the waters flew
A thing of life. Her heart was far too kind
 An insect's wing to mar ;
She wept whene'er the hunter warriors came
 With trophies from afar.

Her eager feet companioned her sire, —
 A sunbeam round his way,
Anear the council-fire and at the feast
 Wherever he must stay.
She shared his respite and repose at night,
 His wanderings by day ;
She planted vines and flowers near the tent,
 Their tendrils taught to twine
Above the door, or, reaching to some tree,
 With branches to combine.
Thus were her young years nurtured, thus her feet
 Trode the sweet paths of life,
Unconscious of its sharp and piercing thorns,
 Or serpent fangs of strife.

IV.

At last there came a wild and fearful change,
 As though an April day
Turned suddenly with all its smiles and flowers
 To winter's drear dismay !
One twilight hour she wandered near the shore
 Of that bright silver stream,
Where her sweet mother's form had passed before,
 When lo ! a startling dream
Or vision fell upon her raptured sense ;
 A glory so supreme
That all the brightness of the day seemed lost
 Concentred in its gleam,
And from the sunset clouds a form of life
 Flew, like a snowy dove,
Bending above her ; a surpassing face
 And eyes of dewy love

Shone, then the air grew vocal with the song
Her mother oft had sung,
And the strange mantle of a trance-like sleep
Over her soul was flung.
Her people heard the sound, and all were thrilled
With swift presentiment.
They knew the Great Spirit unto the child
A messenger had sent, —
Whether of death or famine, pestilence
Or war, they could not know ;
But waited till Ouina might awake.
None near her form did go,
But sat aloof, expectant full of awe,
Until the silver bow
Of the white mother of the months had passed
The western verge below ;
Then the child came as pale as the pale dream
Of fear which haunted them ;
A halo shone around her fair young brow
Down to the fringed hem
Of her bright robe ; and straightway to her sire
She walked with steady tread
Bearing a message full of deep import, —
A warning from the dead.
Thus spake she, with clear unreluctant tones,
While her sire bowed his head : —
“ Across the stream where I have wandered oft,
To gather the wild flowers,
I heard a voice like the winds rustling
Among the leafy bowers ;
And then I saw a form so beautiful
That everything grew fair.



And soon a sound, unlike any bird's song,
 Floated upon the air.
The face that I beheld was like my own,
 I've seen it in the stream ;
I knew it was my mother's voice I heard,
 And not an idle dream.
I fell into a sleep and saw a cloud
 Arising in the west ;
When it came near it seemed a mighty host
 Of warriors ; each breast
Was bared, and painted eagles' plumes
 Were on each brow, and bows
Were drawn, while quivering arrows keen
 And clubs sent fearful blows
Among your people. You went forth in might,
 To conquer and to slay ;
But then I saw your bravest people fall,
 And some were borne away.
That mighty chief ruled o'er the land now yours ;
 And you found no relief
From want and woe and all that brings despair,
 Or bows the soul with grief.
Full soon another and a darker cloud
 Arose, where the clear eye
Of the Great Spirit looks upon the world,
 Far in the eastern sky, —
A cloud like a white bird borne on the wind,
 And flying o'er the sea ;
Another and another came, until
 There seemed at last to be
As many as the flocks of birds that fly
 Each year above our home.

They bore strange people with their snowy wings,
 With faces like my own.
Then saw I all your broken, scattered tribes
 Fleeing with footsteps fast,
A mighty warrior upon their trail,
 And you, dear sire, at last,
In sorrow and despair, perish with those
 Who clung all lovingly,
And would not leave you till the latest hope
 Had faded swift away.
At last the western mountains hid their forms
 From my bewildered sight ;
I thought they must have gone to that bright world,
 The hunting-grounds of light.
Before one harvest-moon has come and gone,
 The first cloud will arise ;
A mighty western chieftain comes to claim
 One, who, within the skies,
Treads now a brighter path than you could find,
 Though yours were paved with flowers ;
Her wondrous beauty he hath learned, and comes
 To bear her to his bowers.
And after many winter snows shall pass
 Those white birds o'er the water
Will bring the people with the pale white face ;
 And you, and I your daughter,
Will dwell with Manitou in that bright home
 Where all our loved ones are.
This, mighty sire, was all I saw and heard."
 Just then a falling star
Sped like an arrow to the western verge :
 Ouina sought her bed

Of softest furs, her sire in silence sat
As though his ghost had fled.
The morning dawned, and still the chieftain's form
Was moveless as before ;
His people dared not break his silence grim,
Nor near his wigwam door.
Ouina, too, they shunned, and whispered low,
And far apart they sate,
While she unconscious of their mutterings,
Beheld her sire, thus late
Motionless, as she had left him when the eyes
Of spirits o'er them shone.
Yet she forbore to break the spell of thought,
But wandered forth alone
To gather wild honey for food, and float
Adown the shining stream,
Or chase the squirrel to his leafy haunt,
Or bask in the bright beam
Of day ; yet evermore a vague, sad, strange,
And wild presentiment,
Like memory of some forgotten dream,
Across her spirit went.
Then bursting into one of those wild songs,
Waking the warblers' strain,
She soon forgot the fleeting haunting fear,
And all was bright again.
Seven times the sun had dipped his arrows keen
In morning's burning blood,
Seven times the silent moon and her bright train
Had passed the sunset flood,
When from his fasting the proud chief arose
And called his council near,

To build the fire, to gather all around,
His utterance to hear.
The younger braves, hunters, and warriors
Sat on the outer ring,
While near the centre were the sires and those
Most like this forest king.
The women in their wigwams silently
Prepared the pending feast,
Or spoke low words of sobbing sympathy
For Ouina; she, least
Anxious among them, flitted to and fro,
But never sought her sire,
For well she knew, though innocent of wrong,
That she had waked his ire.
He rose among them with a piercing glance
Of unaccustomed light,
Mingled with stern resolve and deepest woe,
With brow as dark as night;
The gentleness had vanished from his face,
But calm and proud he stood,
While wave on wave of agony broke o'er
His heart with its dark flood,
While thus he spoke: "Brothers, my life ere long
Will heavy hang with years,
But never has your chieftain knowingly
Yielded to idle fears;
Never has counseled war nor sought for blood,
Save to defend our home;
But now, alas! a singular dark change
Over his soul has come.
I loved my daughter, she was dear to me
As the fawn to the hind;

I wore her image on my heart, and you
 Were ever dear and kind ;
You saw her beauty and she was your queen.
 Brothers, she is our foe !
The curséd ghosts of those who love us not,
 But seek to bring us woe,
Hold converse with her ; in sweet guise they come,
 Wearing her mother's form ;
But well we know that 'tis their dread intent
 To visit us with harm.
Seven days I sought my kindred, and they came,
 In a white eagle's eye ;
She brings us woe, our customs we must keep :
 Brothers, my child must die !”

A silence palpable as speech prevailed,
 Like the presaging calm
Before the tempest bursts its mighty bonds,
 Or like the fitful balm
Of medicine to deadly pain, and then,
 In stifled tumult wild,
Murmurings rose from the young warriors, —
 They loved the maiden child.
One spoke, his words were like the cleaving shock
 Of thunder in the sky,
His potent pleadings would have moved a stone :
 “ Why should the maiden die ?
Why cut her off in all her tender bloom
 Like a sweet flower, or bird
Before its pinions are full fledged to fly, —
 Before its song is heard ?
She only gave you what her vision saw,

And if it bring us harm,
Then you can take her life, or our great men
Can cure her deadly charm."
And as his form swayed like the forest-tree,
So swayed the multitude
Around him: 'twas a protest wonderful
In its rich plentitude
Of eloquence. He warned the chieftain sire
Against this violence;
He seemed to catch the breath of justice, too
Pleading its recompense.
But he prevailed not, for the elder sires
Upheld their chieftain strong;
And one by one the younger warriors
Came up to join the throng.
Twenty were chosen, surest in the hunt,
Whose arrows fierce had stung
The foe, or snatched the choicest game. With these
The eloquent of tongue;
The sachems bade them, ere the coming feast,
Their arrows to prepare
With drops distilled by the most skillful art
From poison subtle rare.
Seven days they held their council and their feast;
Ouina, meanwhile, free
To roam at will, but near the council-fire
She could no longer be,
Her spirit vaguely solving all the while
Some pending mystery.
The seventh morn had come, the same bright dawn
Which first inspired our lay,—
This preparation for a fearful deed,
That waited for the day.

The chieftain called his twenty chosen braves
With a strange signal stroke ;
They snatched the maiden from her sweet repose,
She, wondering, awoke ;
They bared her fair form and unbound her hair,
With withes her hands confined,
And led her forth to the consuming fire ;
Relenting, almost kind,
They would have paused, but the strong spell of fear,
The chieftain's deadly eye,
Constrained them to their fearful, dreadful task, —
They led her forth to die !
Near the strong trunk of poisonous hemlock-tree,
The sacrificial flame
Was kindled, and to this they lashed her form ;
Then when the signal came,
Aimed all their deadly, poisoned, venomed barbs,
When, suddenly, one sprang
Toward the flame, from out the murderous ranks,
With voice like trumpet clang.
Too late ! for ere the weapons or the hand
That would have saved drew near,
The death arrows had pierced her quivering form.
But far above all fear
Her soul was caught in a triumphal fire,
A glory all its own.
Calm as St. Agnes, and as beautiful,
She died without a moan.
Around her brow the same transcendent gleam,
As on that visioned night,
Shone, and the echo of a sainted song
Filled the air with affright.

The maiden morning dawned supremely fair,
Like an unfolding rose
Upon the breast of time, or like the gates
Which paradise enclose.

V.

The martyrs have not always been victims
To Christian sacrifice.
These people, by the simple laws of faith,
Knew not the sophistries
With which through sacerdotal rite and pomp
Of prelate and of priest,
The Christian rulers of the world have slain
The greatest and the least.
This chieftain's ruin was his pride ; alas !
Civilization brings
Few heroes, rulers, princes, potentates,
Who strive for higher things !
She stones her prophets, seers, and crucifies
Her saviors in each age.
The cruel murder of this sylvan saint
Proves how alike the page
Of every nation's history, if read
Aright, God's messengers,
Derided, persecuted, tortured, slain,
Will find a death like hers.

KANAWA.

But retribution, governed by no law
 We can evade or break,
Comes sometimes swifter than the opening maw
 Of the seething earthquake,
And overwhelms the victim of its power.
 At dawn on that dread day,
No trace of that unhappy chieftain's tribe
 Remained — they sped away.
Yet wheresoe'er he wandered, flutterings
 Of the wild flitting birds
Seemed mocking him with face and form like hers
 And echoing her words.
Her spirit seemed to whisper in the trees
 And vanish when he came,
Then follow him with haunting lightest step,
 Speaking for aye his name.
With downcast eye, and face whose lines increased
 With each sun's parting ray,
He paused not, — followed by his restless band,
 Until one autumn day,
When the round harvest-moon was full,
 And forests wore the dye
Of colors brighter than the war-birds' plumes,
 A fierce and dreadful cry
Awoke the wild beasts in their lairs, and stirred
 Each tree with trembling fear.
He knew the warning by the prophecy,
 He knew his foe was near.
Swifter than sting of death, the piercing thought

Entered his sinking heart, —
That his fair daughter had been rudely slain
By his own murderous dart.
But danger gives no moments to remorse:
His young men heard the call,
And eager for relief from idleness
They came with war-plumes all.
In haste he held the council for the fight,
And, conscious of his skill,
Soon laughed to scorn all the forebodings grim, —
“I will be greatest still.”
Vain boast; his tribes were scattered far and near,
His warriors, though brave,
Had long been idle, yet they rallied now,
Their chieftain's band to save.
Stealthily and by slow degrees, the foe
All silently drew near, —
It was the proud Kanawa and his band.
Yet they scorned any fear,
But to the conflict, in their own wild way,
They swiftly, fiercely came,
And fought as though they bore a charmed life,
In their proud chieftain's name.

Defeated, vanquished, still pursued, the chief
To the fair stream now fled,
And when the morning brightened o'er the world
They found him silent — dead.
Shame, grief, remorse, and retribution stern,
Had wrought this work so wild,
And prostrate neath the sacrificial tree
He sought his murdered child.

“Let there be light!” The morning shone as fair
As other morns had done ;
The winter’s snows had covered all the boughs,
And their white wings had gone.
The smile of the Great Spirit woke again
The warblings of the birds ;
From the forest Ouina spoke once more
Her sweet and thrilling words ;
And from the air and from the hunting-grounds,
The “Islands of the Blest,”
She sang. They placed her body and her sire’s
Where they might sweetly rest,
Anear the music of the haunted stream,
On nature’s soothing breast.
Each time they wandered to the distant sea,
They to the river came
To cast a stone upon the little mound,
In sweet Ouina’s name.
One hundred harvest-moons they were no more ;
This tribe had lost its home,
And other stronger chieftains came to claim
The valley for their own.
The mound became a hill, and on its brow
The sighing pine-trees wave,
Like echoes from the hunting-grounds above,
O’er Shenandoah’s grave.
The valley and the river bear his name ;
Ever the waters’ flow
Mingle their music with the pine-trees’ song
In monodies below.

VI.

REQUIEM TO OUINA.

I.

Sleep, maiden, sleep :
All our flowing and our going
Shall not thee harm ;
Sunbeams glancing, waters dancing,
Thy slumber charm, —
Branches training, interlacing
Over thy bed.

II.

Sleep, princess, sleep :
Had we found thee, we had bound thee
With each bright gem ;
Thy death frowning was thy crowning,
Rare diadem :
• So thy beauty and thy duty
Have crowned thee, dead.

III.

Sleep, Ouina, sleep :
The sun's splendor is more tender
Since thou art gone.
Stars are weeping, their watch keeping ;
Night's queen alone,
Silent crosses the cool mosses
Where thou hast trode.

IV.

Wake, beauty, wake :
Glow-worms glisten, night-birds listen
For thy voice clear ;
And the pleasance of thy presence
Ever is dear ;
So enchanting thy form haunting
Our still abode.

V.

Wake, spirit, wake :
Our mists, laden to thy Aiden
With perfumes rise
O'er yon fountain to the mountain
Of sunset skies ;
Unseen spirit, we inherit
Thy paradise.

INTERLUDE.

Shall I give wings to my thoughts to go after thee, O
thou beautiful beloved one ;
To enfold and mantle thee, keeping from thee harm, O
thou rare and golden as the sun ;
To scatter the clouds and mists that gather o'er thee,
drawn thither by thy splendid light ;
To sweep all the dust and the thorns from 'neath thy
feet, with my wings of perfect delight ?
Shall I bear thee aloft o'er the storms that encompass
thee on my pinions of gladness ?
Shall I sing thee a song that will charm thy soul with
its sweet mournful madness,
Whose burden forever and ever is only of thee, till thy
splendid starlit eyes
Melt and flow, and thy soul answers my song with its
own notes of rapture and sweet surprise ?
Or, Actæon like, shall I dare brave all for thy sake,
thinking only of thee, my beloved ?
Shall I be every form, every sound, and O, every joy
with which thou art moved ?
Nay, but in my selfish musing I must never forget that
'tis thou, and not I, must declare
All that I am, or to be, and I sit still and wait until
thou, transcendent beyond all compare,
Shall meet me in all thy glory with the crown of love,
seeing me as I enraptured turn, —
Beholding thee in every form of loveliness that I see
in the glow of the day-stars that burn.

In all beautiful sights and shades of nature's face I
 behold thy peerless countenance ;
No other face, no other form, but thy image everywhere.
 If I move, thou dost then advance ;
From the willow boughs and the dark of the crescent
 moon I see thy smile like a seraph of light,
And I know thy spirit is ever by my side. Thou, thou
 art the day and the night
And the stars, the sun's golden and the white of moons,
 and all the living firmament ;
Thou meetest me in the panting turf beneath my feet,
 and thy kisses in zephyrs are sent ;
I feel thy caresses on my warm brow and loose hair, —
 these are thine forever, and only thine, —
And I fold thee inclosing, embracing, retaining thee ; all
 our limbs and our thoughts intertwine,
O, how can I follow thee when thou art never away,
 but art mine ever and always mine !

I.

I would sing a song of the Free,
 But "my harp is hung on the willows ;"
On the shore of a nameless sea
 I am swept by the aimless billows.
The desolate strand meets my view,
 And the scourge of a dread pursuer
Is piercing me through and through,
 While life's hopes grow few and fewer.

II.

I would sing a song of the True,
 But my muse in sad sorrow lingers,

Having drunk of the deadly dew
That has palsied her snowy fingers.
The false world is moving apace,
And the seasons in coming and going
Are robbing the world of its grace,
And all its rare blossoms past blowing.

III.

I would sing a song of the Fair,
But the earth is full of strange shadows ;
They startle the summer air,
And are haunting the vernal meadows ;
The grim darkened shadows of fear
Rise over and walk with us mostly,
Filling all the drear atmosphere
With images ghastly and ghostly.

IV.

I would sing a song of pure Joy,
But the sound of its horrid mocking
Seemeth only a dread decoy
To allure into terrors more shocking ;
For we dance o'er nameless graves,
And our garish torches of pleasure
Reveal but the fallen braves
Who join in our desolate measure.

V.

I would sing a song of the Brave,
The earth's heroes are sleeping so sweetly,
But I plant on each lonely grave
A violet blossoming meekly ;

For the ghosts of a people wronged
Stalk over their graves and under,
And the world with their shades is thronged²
To fill us with sorrow and wonder.

VI.

So I'll sing no song, but will weave
Into broken echoes of sadness
The glimpse of a soul's reprieve
From a bitter and wonderful madness, —
Of a race that is passing away,
Like the trees of the forest splendid ;
No voice ever bids them stay,
No one grieves when their life is ended.

PART II.



LAUS NATURA.

Dedicated to

WALT WHITMAN,

THE POET OF NATURE.



PRELUDE.

I.

THE plumes of lofty pine-trees ;
How they wave :
The leafy forest feathers ;
How they wave :
The bending birchen branches ;
How they wave :
The banners of the beeches ;
How they wave :
The crimson mottled maples ;
How they wave :
The hemlock and the cedar ;
How they wave :
The grasses on the meadows ;
How they wave :
The golden crested corn-fields ;
How they wave :
The wings of the wild songsters ;
How they wave :
The pinions of the eagles ;
How they wave !

II.

The plumes of the Great Spirit ;
How they wave :

Gitchie manitou, Creator,
How they wave :
The Preserver and Destroyer,
How they wave :
Among the serried war-clouds,
How they wave :
In tempest and in thunder,
How they wave :
In lightning and in whirlwind,
How they wave :
Bending above the forest,
How they wave :
Reaching from earth to Heaven,
How they wave :
To Islands of the Blessed,
How they wave :
To hunting-grounds Eternal,
How they wave :
Beyond the clouds of sunset,
How they wave :
With red and purple banners,
How they wave :
With cloud canoes of crimson
How they wave :
Bearing souls o'er the river,
How they wave :
Reaching the great forever,
How they wave !

III.

The war plumes of the Red-man,
How they wave :

Plucked from the flying eagles,
How they wave :
From wings of dauntless eagles,
How they wave :
From soaring, diving eagles,
How they wave :
Painted for their war bonnet,
How they wave :
Dipped in the fire of sunset,
How they wave :
In red blood of their foeman,
How they wave !

IV.

The curling, feathered smoke wreaths,
How they wave :
Rising from lowly wigwams,
How they wave :
From villages and hamlets,
How they wave :
Beside the flowing river,
How they wave :
Among the hills and valleys,
How they wave :
Up the steep sides of mountains,
How they wave :
From dark and solemn forests,
How they wave :
Haunted with ghosts and spirits ;
How they wave :
Beside the broad prairie,
How they wave :

From midnight feast and war-dance,
How they wave:
From Calumet the Peace-pipe,
How they wave:
From wise and peaceful councils,
How they wave:
Of many mighty nations, —
How they wave:
Living so near to nature,
How they wave:
Much closer to her bosom,
How they wave:
Than we can know or utter, —
How they wave:
So close they cannot see her,
How they wave:
But only hear her heart beat,
How they wave:
And feel its sweet pulsations, —
How they wave:
Smoke feathers ever rising,
How they wave:
Bearing the thoughts and praises,
How they wave:
The hopes, and prayers, and blessings,
How they wave:
Laden with all the burdens
How they wave:
Of nations in their anguish,
How they wave:
Ascending like a spirit,
How they wave:

Upward and outward ever,
How they wave :
Lost in the mists and shadows,
How they wave :
Restored in the Hereafter.
How they wave !

I.

The anthem rose and fell
Like the proud Ocean's swell,
Breaking around her feet
In fragments pure and sweet ;
Up from the vales it poured,
Each syllabled low word,
Like sound of eagle's wings
When to the sun he springs,
Or like the undertone
Of the sad sea alone,
Or as the skylark wings
Its way from earth and sings ;
The viewless air was filled
With murmurings, which thrilled
And moved her more and more ;
A bright light went before
Her vision, from afar
A voice fell like a star :
" O maiden, pure as snow,
Fairer than aught below,
Turn thou thy tender eyes
Downward from the fair skies ;
Once more across the years,

Wide weary waste of woe,
Extend thy thoughts below.
Behold what wrongs were done
Beneath thy own bright sun,
When thou, too young in years
To know the dark dread fears
With which this bitter wrong
Made thine oppressors strong :
O loved, O undefiled,
Thou wonderful rare child,
Thy grief hath made thee strong ;
Thy woes, though drear and long,
Have clothed thee in light,
In robes of spotless white.
Once more bend thy dear head
Not o'er thine own fair dead, —
For well we know thine eyes
Seek them in Paradise ;
Thy tears have laved the ground
Where blossoms now abound ;
Each martyred soul has risen
Up from the grave's dim prison,
And weaves in heaven now
A chaplet for thy brow.
But for thine own dear sake,
Whose heart would bleed and break
At unrequited wrong,
Listen to their sad song ;
They have beheld thy face
Adorned with childhood's grace.
Ere men had named thee fair
They saw, beyond compare,

How beautiful thou wast ;
And whensoever they passed
Near thy sacred abode
With reverent feet they trode,
Worshipping those unseen
Loved hills where thou hadst been,
And praised, though hid from sight,
Those who were thy delight,
Believing the still air
Held them forever fair,
Until thou didst return.
When thy young life was riven
By sorrow's shafts, 'twas given
Their hearts to comfort thee,
Once more thine eyes to see
Lighted with smiles as fair
As sunlight on the air.
They followed thy young feet
With thoughts as sad and sweet
As flowers o'er the dead,
"For she is gone," they said,
"Where we can never go."
They whispered sad and slow,
With voices hushed and low,
They mourned and loved thee so ;
They followed thee, with eyes
Tender with sad surprise,
To thy new destinies.
They knew thee gentle, kind ;
The wounded, hunted hind
Never came mute and sore
Before thy cavern door,

That thou with tenderness
Didst not the sufferer dress,
And her soft sides caress.
Never the bleeding bird
Anear thy footsteps stirred,
That thou with ready hand
And touch like fairy's wand
Didst not bind up its wing,
Nor leave till it would sing.
They knew this, and they said, —
“Whatever comes instead,
She still will be a child,
Gentle and sweet and mild ;
Not all the pride of earth
Can mar her stainless worth.”
When in thy name, the wars
Hurled cruel shafts of Mars
Against them, pressing sore
Hearts wounded oft before ;
And when in thy sweet name,
The torture and the flame
Fell on the young and old,
’Till they were pale and cold ;
Women and babes were slain,
Or frozen on the plain,
Or driven to the wild,
The mother and her child ;
When fleeing, hunted still,
From river side and hill,
Betrayed by basest wiles,
By falsehood's venom'd smiles,
By treachery, deceit,

Defeated, when complete,
Entire ruin prevailed,
And all their rights assailed,
Stolen, filched one by one
Till the last hope was gone ;
Not upon thee their blame,
The infamy and shame, —
Not once against thy name
Was breathed a vengeful word ;
But all their ire was stirred
To strike the cowards down
Who robbed thee of thy crown,
And theirs, for aye to be
Worn by the brave and free, —
Thy lily crown of right
Placed on thy forehead white.
Or when, their proffers spurned,
Like bruised serpents they turned
And stung those who betrayed,
Fighting all undismayed
For what they held most dear,
Battling without a fear,
Braving all pain and death,
Rather than give one breath
Of their free air to those
Who caused their nameless woes, —
When cruelty and wrong
Had made their vengeance strong ;
When might had conquered right,
And retribution's night
Fell on their foes in dire,
Dread sounds of battle fire ;

When dwelling, hamlet, town,
In flames was hurried down ;
When in their turn they gave
No heed to the cry " Save !"
Sparing only the kind,
The few whom love did bind ;—
Never against thy heart
Was hurled one fiery dart.
They held thee far above,
Looking with eyes of love
On thy deep agony,
Thy untold misery ;
Saying, " From the deep trance,
O, turn thy loving glance ;
Look on us for a while,
Lady of love and smile."
Broken their scattered bands,
Palsied their fearless hands,
Death holds them cold and still
Beneath his iron will.
Or if, far o'er the plain,
Their remnants still remain,
Not upon bended knee
Do they petition thee ;
Theirs is no craven's prayer ;
They still can fight and dare, —
They do not fear to die.
The pathway to the sky
Is lighted by the fires
Of risen braves and sires ;
But for the sake of truth,
And justice, and thy youth, —

Because they love thee well,
And near thy smile would dwell, —
Because though they are weak
And few, their dead yet speak
From their unnumbered graves,
The warriors and braves ;
With mute mouths motionless,
Their silent pleadings press.
From stream and river side,
Where, bleeding, they have died ;
From every foot of sod,
Where, gazing up to God,
The flowers' tearful eyes
Weep o'er their sacrifice ;
From mounds of sacred stones
Covering their white bones ;
From shores beaded with spray,
Where they were wont to stray ;
Where sobbing murmuring waves
Wash o'er their nameless graves ;
From fallen forest trees,
Ravaged and torn, like these
Scattered and shattered bands,
They plead with dead cold hands ;
From the wild eastern coast,
The nation's pride and boast,
Each grim and startled ghost
Appears by stream and lake,
In deep morass and brake.
The pines are haunted so
With whisperings of woe,
Its echoes murmur back

From the fair Merrimac ;
The Androscoggin pours
In tears along the shores ;
The mountain's brow is white
With a ghastly, ghostly light ;
The Apalachian range
With horror is made strange ;
Far on those gleaming heights,
Burn weird and haunting lights ;
From the Atlantic's plain,
Where hovering still remain
The memories of days
Long passed ; from those fair bays,
The haunts of spring-time loves,
A mighty murmur moves.

II.

POWHATAN.

Powhatan pleads ; his tongue
To no base falsehood clung.
Wise was he for his time,
Skilled in those arts sublime
Of peace and perfect rule ;
His was the simple school
Of nature ; though severe,
Still it was held as dear,
As sacred as the laws
Having a baser cause.
The pride of Christian kings,
Wealth, power, and such things,

As named Enlightenment,
Into his realm were sent,
To ravage and to kill
At their unbridled will.
Noble his heart and mind,
Brave, hospitable, kind,
When asked to betray
His people, he would say,
"This is no coward's hand,
It strikes for this dear land."
When harassed, tortured, pressed,
His people sore distressed,
He still would brook no peace,
E'en for his child's release,
Save that which satisfied
His honor and his pride.
Had Roman citizen,
Or one of Sparta's men,
Or heroes of renown
Who wore a robber's crown,
But proved themselves as brave
Their nation's life to save,
Blazoned upon the page
Of history, each age
Would mark them for all time
As patriots sublime.
For nature's noblemen
There is no Plutarch's pen, —
No strong impartial glaive,
To rescue and to save.
But these were laws as pure,
More fitting to endure

Than those whom love of gold
Their nation's honor sold,
Or bartered truth for power
In proud ambition's hour. . .

III.

POCAHONTAS.

Fair Pocahontas pleads.
Her life and noble deeds
Shine out through the dim years,
Like stars or angels' tears,
Her slanderers to shame ;
They who would thus defame
A woman's sacred name, —
'Ravishing e'en the dead,
To tear from honor's head
The crown, more priceless far
Than Fame's dim chaplets are, —
Would light the martyrs' fires
For unhallowed desires ;
Would barter their own souls,
To gain ambition's goals ;
Would even Truth defy,
And murmur "Crucify !"
She pleads all eloquent,
Who by her kindness went
Through the dark night and storm,
By her brave heart kept warm,
To do her foemen good,
To bring them warning, food ;

Who, young in thoughts and years,
Strove by her prayers and tears
To calm the dreadful ire
And vengeance of her sire
When once his nation's foe
Was captive. But the "No"
That came from his strong will,
Proved that he would fulfill
The dreadful doom of death.
When in another breath
She placed her own fair head
Upon the doomed, and said,
"I give my life instead ;"
Saved one who loved not her,
But was her worshipper
Thereafter. Then her sire,
Obeying her desire,
Bade him again go forth ;
And for that deed of worth,
War's bloody shaft was sent
Across his continent ;
His child a captive bound,
To heal the gaping wound.
Her loveliness did move
A noble youth to love,
And she, his faith to prove,
Bade him go seek her sire
And learn his heart's desire.
Not for those gifts nor gold,
Nor promises untold,
Not e'en for her release,
Would the chief promise peace.

But when he knew his child
With love was crowned, he smiled,
And gave her to the one
She loved, naming him son.
This token that the wars
Were ended, till the bars
Of death closed o'er him,
Never grew dark nor dim ;
And though he loved them not,
His foes, he ne'er forgot
The daughter of his heart,
And dwelt alone, apart.
She pleads ; far o'er the sea
Her fadeless memory
Weaves chaplets for the free ;
Tossed on the angry tide,
Awhile they will abide ;
Then near and nearer come
To her own native home.
On the Potomac's breast
The wreathed flowers shall rest ;
Over Virginia's shore
The spray of leaves shall pour ;
Her soul shall haunt the hills,
Her step beside the rills
Be heard ; "for nations wed,
There should be peace instead
Of endless cruel strife ;
For ye I gave my life."
Yet countless as the sands
Are those whom war's commands
Have hurried to death's shore ;

They plead for evermore.
Powhatan and his braves
Sleep in forgotten graves ;
No monumental stone
Tells of their brave deeds done !
New sounds of woe are heard,
New wrongs the winds have stirred,
Other cries rend the air ;
And bleeding hearts all bare
Plead up to Heaven of wrongs
Great as these sad, sad songs.
But Justice never sleeps ;
Somewhere his angel keeps
The record of those years, —
A nation's tortures, fears,
The blood they gave for tears.
And when those names are traced,
No falsehood e'er disgraced
Who loved their native sod,
Their people and their God.
Along that sacred line
Powhatan's name shall shine.

IV.

MASSASOIT.

Round Massasoit's head
A halo bright is shed ;
Though dim the records are,
His glory, like a star,
Shines through history's night,
Transcendent, clear, and bright.

Of high kingly renown,
He wore the native crown
Won by merit and worth,
Not heritage of birth.
Not for his wars his fame ;
Though brave, his gentle name
Proves him both kind and wise.
Mild were his fearless eyes,
One of the noble race,
Who welcomed with sweet grace
His brothers as they came
From far off fields of Fame,
Over the trackless sea,
To find a home with thee ;—
And loving thee and thine,
He bowed at thy bright shrine,
Seeing thee smiling fair,
Brighter than jewels rare.
At peace with all his kind,
Even his foes could find
No cause for cruel wrong ;
His wisdom fastened strong
The chains of love and faith
Around him till his death.
For fifty winters' snows
He warded off the blows
Of his loved nation's foes.
The war-cloud he could bend
To Peace and her sweet end ;
He saw it soon must break.
O, for his gentle sake,
Whose dead hands wear no stain,

Who wildly pleads again,
Who closed his eyes in love,
The world can well approve
His noble life and death ;
Unto thy latest breath
He pleads for the great woe
Which followed, blow on blow,
Falling, chiefly, on one, —
His brave and valiant son.
E'en Massasoit mild
Rose to defend his child ;
Up from his peaceful grave
He rose thy name to save.
'Twas not so great a woe
For him to suffer so,
As that such things could be ;
For he would rather see
His people fade and die
From out the sun's clear eye,
Than that such ghastly deeds
Should sow their bloody seeds.

V.

KING PHILIP.

King Philip pleads. His wrongs
Speak with appalling tongues
Against his Christian foes :
O, be not thou as those.
Never such deeds were done
Beneath the burning sun,

Save on thy sacred sod,
Thus consecrate to God.
Though stern in arts of war,
No stain can ever mar
His love of home and kin,
The glory he did win.
Gentle was he and kind ;
No captive e'er did find
Him cruel or severe ;
Friendship was ever dear ;
His heritage was good ;
On nature's rank he stood,
And his great valor proved,
Defending those he loved.
'Tis true, he wisely planned,
And his own vantage scanned,
To strike the final blow
On those who sure and slow
Were robbing him of home
And kin, — who treacherous come
To barter and to slay,
And on his dear ones prey.
'Tis true he suffered long, —
Nature ever is strong, —
Suffered for fire and food,
Let it be understood
They suffer not in vain
Who such conquests can gain.
'Tis true he nobly died,
And better by his side
To stand to-day, than wear
The brand which those must bear,

Who, being Christians, said :
“ We have King Philip’s head ;
Never, living or dead,
Shall he possess it more.”
And thus from door to door,
From town to town, ’twas sent,
This horrid monument
Of bigotry and pride.
These would have crucified
Their Saviour. Not alone
Are these great wrongs his own.
Last of his kingly band,
Swept, like the grains of sand
Caught in the whirlwind’s breath,
To misery and death.
He pleads for that brave boy,
His youngest hope and joy, —
Who, though King Philip’s son,
No other crime had done, —
Was first condemned to death,
But in another breath
To slavery was sold, —
His body bought for gold.
But for his fearless soul,
It would not brook control ;
Beneath the galling glaive
He would not toil a slave,
Away from home and kin ;
No bribe or threat could win ;
His captors he defied,
And, proudly starving, died.
Bend low your heads, ye hills,

In shame ; ye sparkling rills,
Turn all your drops to blood,
To wipe away this flood.
O, granite cliffs, bow down,
Surrender your fair crown ;
Ye forests and bright fields,
Your vernal beauties yield ;
In ashes and in dust,
O bow, for God is just !
And somewhere His right hand
Hath placed the burning brand,
O Athenia, thou,
Upon thy false fair brow.

VI.

CANONICUS.

A twofold matchless power
Shone in a darker hour, —
Canonicus the brave,
Striving his race to save,
With Miantonomo.
And though these two were slain,
Never will dawn again
The day when wisdom's star
Will shine, from years afar,
As in their breasts it shone
To those who were their own.
But 'mid the din of years,
One friend, above all fears,
Was true to them and kind, —
Whose deeds of love did bind

Them ever to his heart.
And though the fiery dart
Was hurled afar and near,
To him they said, "No fear
Need come to thy kind breast ;
Thou and thy kin shall rest
Free from all harm." Six snows
Witnessed their fearful blows
Of ravagement around.
His home secure was found,
His loved, his life preserved, —
A boon full well deserved.
Honor to those high souls
Whom truth and love controls ;
And honor to the brave
Who thus their friend could save.

VII.

CANONCHET.

Nor will the winds forget
Thy valor, Canonchet.
Brave as the bravest, fleet
As the swift winds thy feet ;
Never against thy race
Wouldst thou once turn thy face
To aid thy Christian foes ;
Not even against those
Who never were thy friends,
To serve no baser ends,
Wouldst thou betray the brave,
Not e'en thy life to save.

VIII.

GARANGULA.

Garangula, thy tongue
With eloquence was hung :
As grapes upon the vine,
As clustering fruits that twine
Around the giant oak ;
Or as the lightning stroke
Thy words, when on thy foes
Were hurled the fearful blows,
Faster and faster fell
Thy tones, the deadly spell.
Nothing could quench the fire
Of thy proud soul's desire ;
True to thy plighted trust,
Brave, generous, and just,
Serving only the good,
As by thee understood ;
Never thy free consent
To any wrong was lent.
O, that thy words could move
A nation into love !
Thy voice is speaking still,
Thy great and fearless will
Its silent torrent pours
Down from those haunted shores ;
The peaceful golden fields
A thrilling harvest yields ;
The nation feels thy breath ;
Down through the gate of Death

Thy thronging kindred come
From their eternal home.

IX.

TECUMSEH.

Tecumseh, thy brave vow,
Slayer of the stern brow,
Still echoes from the hills
And murmurs in the rills.
The lightning is thy breath,
And all its words are death.
Fierce charmer, dread decoy,
Thine was the pride and joy
The wild war-cry to wake,
And thy stern vengeance take
On those who ravaged thee
Of land and liberty ;
Wonderful was thy skill
To hold beneath thy will
Thy people. Thou wert strong,
Battling against the wrong ;
Invincible, brave soul,
Thine was the martyr's goal ;
For driven, driven still,
From river side and hill,
From hunting-grounds and graves,
Sacred to sires and braves,
Trifled with and betrayed,
Thou reverently obeyed
Nature's deep impulse grand, —
To grasp with steady hand

The strong avenging blade ;
Nor once thy purpose stay'd,
Invoking thy loved sires
To burn their sacred fires
On the broad plains above
To aid thee by their love.
Thus armed thou didst stand
The terror of the land.
Not as a valiant soul
Alone upon the scroll
Of fame, thy name shall shine,
But every deed of thine,
Tecumseh, aye shall be
A watchword for the free.

X.

LOGAN.

From the Kenhawa's breast,
Rising in wild unrest,
A murmur of deep woe
Is heard ; first soft and low,
Then startling all the air
With its cry like despair ;
The lingering echo dies,
In sad and mute surprise.
Logan, it is thy voice ;
No more the winds rejoice,
Nor the sweet airs of spring
In joy their perfumes fling ;
No more the dancing rills
Leap joyous down the hills ;

The river's tide no more
Kisses the vernal shore
In sign of tenderness ;
But deep, sullen distress
Is heard in every tone
For thee, since thou art gone, —
And since thy nameless grief
Found no fitting relief,
No recompense for life,
But only woe and strife.
O, patient soul of pain,
Let him not plead in vain.
O, lady, sad and sweet,
The waves his woes repeat,
Floating upon the tide,
His dear ones by his side ;
Knowing full well no wrong
Around his fair name clung,
Waiting within the shade,
In murderous ambushade,
The dastard cowards drew
And his beloved ones slew.
All unprovoked the wrong ;
His voice was ever strong
For peace ; but when his kin
Were slain, so foul a sin
His thirst for vengeance stirred,
And never more a word
Of love or praise he spoke,
But the loud war-cry woke ;
Nor sheathed again his blade
'Till death its purpose stayed.

Had he been cruel, stern,
Or if his heart did burn
To do his fellows wrong,
Then would 'this sad true song
No more his pleadings pour
Upon the vernal shore.
But he was noble, true,
Keeping for aye in view
Those hospitable rules
Unknown in Christian schools.
And when his people strove
To win him from the love
He bore to thee and thine,
No art could lure or twine
Around his heart to kill
That love save this great ill.
O, matchless eloquence,
By sorrow made intense,
And deep as undertones
Of the sad sea-soul moans.
These words of fire shall burn
Wherever men may turn,
Rising to mock and shame
The flippant tongues who blame
A soul so proud and great,
Beyond this earthly state.
Above all human praise
The hands of Heaven shall raise
A monument of fame,
On which the noble name
Of Logan shall be traced,
And never be effaced.

XI.

OSCEOLA.

Flowers, why do ye bloom
And shed your sweet perfume ;
Why fill and thrill the air
With loveliness so rare ?
Up from the land of light
A deadly cloud, like night,
Blinds the clear eye of day,
Blasts the fair bloom of May.
Like deadly upas shades
The haunted air pervades,
Encircling all the bowers
Usurping their fair powers.
The everglades still hold
Stories of wrongs untold,
Remnants of glory gone
Of life forever flown.
The year, the day was done,
A king, whose race was run,
Sank with the setting sun.
Lingering still, those rays
One tender parting gaze
Flashed over the lagoon
Where hung the golden moon.
Lingering still, the Chief
Feared not the journey brief
Over the river cold ;
But he was faint and old,

A captive on the sod
Where once his free feet trod, —
Too feeble e'en to raise
His eyelids, once to gaze
On the blue bending dome,
On the land once his home.
— Lingered, still the sun
Waited till life was done.
Few were the faithful hands
Left to his last commands.
Tender they raised his form,
Torn by the wars and storm,
Opened for him those eyes ;
Sudden with swift surprise,
Kindled their flashing glance
Like sharp and gleaming lance.
— Slowly the setting sun
Waited till life was done.
Strangers were watching him,
And though his sight was dim,
And the pale spectral guest
Already smote his breast,
Proudly he spoke, and said :
“ Had your master, instead,
Been conquered by my hand,
And died in this, my land,
No stranger's eyes should stare
Thus on him unaware.
Go tell him this,” with pride,
And like a king he died.
— Gone was the setting sun,
The chieftain's race was run.

And all his story told
Was, that he, young and old,
Refused to betray
His people, or to say
The land was not his own.
And every hill and stone
Proclaims his sacrifice
To our dear lady's eyes.
But O, his waking soul
Still holds supreme control,
And all his pride and worth
Speak from the saddened earth.
Never could his lips cling
To falsehood's venom'd sting.
When once his name he signed
To what his foes designed
His people should betray,
Swift as a flash of day
His keen sharp blade was sent
Through the cursed instrument,
Cleaving the bond in twain,
Saying, "No traitor's stain
On Osceola's brow
Shall rest. Ye break your vow."
— And every setting sun
Shines like the name he won.

XII.

PONTIAC.

Thy spirit, Pontiac,
Still hurls thine arrows back,

Not deadly, as before,
But all along the shore
Of thy proud inland seas
They whiz upon the breeze ;
The wild woods, echoing
Thy voice, forever fling
Thy challenge, free from blame,
Thy conquering foes to shame.
Fierce were thy bloody wars,
Thou valiant son of Mars !
Strong 'gainst thy allied foes,
Often thy deadly blows
Gave thee the conqueror's power, —
Once in a dreadful hour
Thine enemies to hold
Prisoners in their stronghold ;
Valorous, brave, severe,
Yet kind to those most dear,
Lighting the midnight fire
To quench thy native ire.
'Tis true the innocent
Often to death were sent ;
Not thine the blame, but those
Who were thy nation's foes,
Seeking still to betray
And drive thy race away.
Conquered, defeated, driven,
By war and famine riven,
Thy race pleads up to Heaven.

XIII.

SAGOYAWATHA.

Sagoyawatha, thou
Of splendid regal brow,
Last of thy line of kings,
From thy proud name there springs
A host of noble words,
Like flocks of dauntless birds
That scorn the earth and soar
Afar their song to pour ;
Or like the antelope
Upon the woodland slope,
Fleeing, all undefiled,
Into the native wild ;
Undaunted and untamed,
Modest, yet unashamed,
Gifted with every grace,
Honored in thy proud place,
In eloquence alone
Peerless, thou crownéd one ;
Moving the heart to tears,
Blanching the cheek with fears,
Or nerving the proud will
Thy purpose to fulfill ;
Swaying the multitudes,
As by the autumn floods
Grasses and leaves are borne,
Trees from their roots upturn ;
Or as the passing breeze
Rustles the leafy trees,

Tossing them more and more,
Till in a deafening roar
Breaks the stern tempest's breath,
Thy words gave life or death.
No threat of foe or friend
Could thy proud spirit bend ;
Generous, though austere,
Never wert thou severe,
Scorning the base intent
Of false enlightenment.
Treachery, crime, deceit,
Never to thee seemed sweet ;
Civilization gave
Nothing to win or save,
But only to destroy
Thy people and their joy.
When like a serpent's coils
It wound them in its toils,
Closer and closer pressed,
Until it stung thy breast,
Apart thou firmly stood,
Choosing thy solitude ;
Nor wore the servile yoke
Bent for thee, thy heart broke.
Silent that matchless voice :
No more the winds rejoice
To hear thy magic tones ;
No more the glad earth owns
Thy footsteps proud and free.
Thy soul of Liberty
Still haunts the sacred shore
Where those bright waters pour

From the vast northern lakes,
Until their surface breaks
In wonderful wild waves,
Rushing to silent graves
O'er Niagara's chasm
With many a fearful spasm, —
With deafening voice of thunder
Bids nations pause and wonder,
Waking the undertone
For thy proud people gone.
The mild Ontario
Still murmurs of thy woe!
As leaves turn brown and sere
When summer yet is here ;
As desolate and torn
The field of unripe corn ;
As the life-giving breath
Of forests turns to death
When ravaged, thy torn race
Have lost their wonted place ;
All silently they hear
Thy noble footsteps near,
But wait for Death's release
To bring them home and peace.
Yet thou, All Eloquent,
Shall live when time is spent.
Beloved, yet awhile
Turn thou thy face and smile ;
Numberless as the sands
Are these uplifted hands ;
As many as the snows
Are their unspoken woes ;

Numerous as the leaves,
That from autumn's brown sheaves
Have fallen to decay,—
Many as these are they.
Far to the boundless West
Their bleeding feet have pressed ;
The Mississippi's tide
Murmurs how they have died.
Not even that fair stream
Could bid them pause, nor dream
Of peace, but hurried on ;
Each promise, one by one,
Broken ; each refuge gone.
Far to the setting sun
They, faint and feeble, fled ;
Yet from the river's bed,
Up from the surging tide
Of waters deep and wide,
The turbid torrent wakes
And murmurs for their sakes,
And voices bear along
The burden of this song : —

XIV.

HYMN TO THE MISSISSIPPI.

I.

“Great Father of Waters !” we pause on thy shores,
Here would we gladly rest,
Close to thy beating breast,
Mingling our sobbings with thy ceaseless roar.

II.

O mightiest river, thou wonderful stream,
 Strong are thy giant arms,
 Matchless thy potent charms,
Widening and deepening like the spirits' dreams.

III.

What tributes are thine from a great continent !
 Such rich full offerings, —
 Richer than gold of kings, —
The ages in barges all laden have sent.

IV.

O, monarch majestic, thy broad brow is bound
 With lakes like living gems,
 Wrought into diadems,
Prouder than earthly kings with splendors crowned.

V.

And, gleaming where Phœbus' morning-car dips
 Far o'er the mountain height,
 Quivering with delight,
The diamond streams flash on thy finger tips.

VI.

Link after link and bright coil upon coil,
 Swift bands thy strong arms bind,
 Then lovingly unwind
To lay on thy bosom their wonderful spoil.

VII.

Like lovers, the rivers are hastening to meet,
Shining and shimmering,
Glancing and glimmering,
To mingle their waters in one at thy feet.

VIII.

Nor pausing, nor resting where golden fields bend,
Each shining, ripening crest,
Alluring them to rest,
But hasten swift footed on thee to attend.

IX.

Nor staying, though prisoned in mill-stream and mart,
Struggling till they are free
They only seek for thee,
To lose all their sorrows in thy great deep heart.

X.

Rare, crystalline streams from the gorges afar,
Bearing the wealth of ores
From nature's wondrous stores,
Love laden, more golden than treasure or star.

XI.

Bright, beautiful streams from the beautiful hills,
Where angels of the morn
Their burnished wings adorn,
Dipping their pinions in thy bright baby rills;

XII.

All giving the wealth which thy broad bosom pours
Lavishly on each side,
Whene'er thy waters' tide
Overflows, enriching all thy vernal shores.

XIII.

A nation, a world sing their praises to thee,
Of thy power and length,
Of thy wonderful strength,
Unbounded thy waters, so potent and free.

XIV.

O "Father of Waters!" thy bosom is deep,
Thy turbid tide doth hold
Treasures and thoughts untold, —
Things sacred to the ages thou dost keep.

XV.

And thou doth bear witness of races ago
Who have laved in thy tide,
Who have named thee in pride,
Crossing to the shadowless land all alone.

XVI.

But up from thy bosom dark shadows appear,
Like a vapor or smoke
By the morning sun woke;
They question thee, river, of those once so dear.

XVII.

They question, — no answer can come from thy heart,
But thy waters can pour
Like their tears on the shore ;
Their images never from thee will depart.

XVIII.

Forever, O river ! thy waters shall run,
And plant in the sod
The germs called by God
To blossom and ripen 'neath the southern sun.

XIX.

Forever the far mountain springs shall arise,
And the bright streams descend,
With thy waters to blend,
Ascending in vapors like souls to the skies.

XX.

Forever and ever upon thy proud breast,
Ships of men, and the trees
And leaves, and e'en these
Proud nations shall float out to an endless rest.

XXI.

Forever, O sire of the rivers ! when thou
Shall be merged in the sea,
And the stream lost in thee,
And the dew in the stream,
And when up, like a dream,

Or a ghost, shall arise,
Thy white soul to the skies,
When all things to the final Spirit must bow —

XXII.

Forever, O Parent of souls ! we are thine ;
And all races of men
Shall be gathered again,
Transfigured, around Thee and thy holy shrine.

XV.

The western wind is wild,
O, thou beloved child,
With sounds of horror rife,
Wasting thy fair young life,
Blighting the vernal tree,
Just blossoming for thee, —
The tree of Liberty.
The eagle, out of sight,
Screams on the mountain height ;
The river and the plain
Wear the accursed stain ;
The sun with plumes of red
Sinks to his fiery bed ;
Within the earth's fair breast
A wild and fierce unrest
Is struggling, — mighty throes
Of sympathy for those
Who plead this hour to thee
In their deep agony.
Nearer and nearer winds
The serpent strong that binds,

Encircles, crushes, stings
These as he fiercely springs ;
Far from the east it girds
Its strokes with lightning words.
With coils of iron bands
Binds down their helpless hands.
With cannon voice and breath
Drives them to madness, death,
To famine, want, and shame,
Diseases without name,
And bids them choose between
Two evils. One has been
Well tried, — the curse of War ;
The other, O to mar
Thy holy name, sweet Peace,
With such brief, sad release
From death as these have known,
Would cause angels to moan.
Two hundred times the sun
His brilliant course has run,
And the round harvest-moon
Has waxed and waned too soon,
Since in thy mother's name
The Pilgrim Fathers came
To plant for her and thee,
The vine of Liberty ;
And every hour and day
Has witnessed some delay, —
New wrongs 'gainst her and thee, —
Till, like that monstrous tree,
Which once taking a root,
Each branch becomes a shoot ;

Again and yet again
It shoots till the whole plain
Is covered with its shade.
So hath this nation made
Its wrongs, that, multiplied,
The hours in terror died ;
The months, deluged in tears,
Perished amid the years ;
And years grew pale with woe
That justice moves so slow.
Instead of Liberty,
Behold the upas-tree.
O thou, oppressed so long,
By suffering made strong,
By prayers and tears o'ertried,
By sorrows purified,
In visions hast thou been
Where truth and love are seen ;
Where nature's primal cause
Unfolds her perfect laws ;
Thou who hath triumph won
O'er all wrongs to thee done,
Who in thy purity
And lovely chastity,
Hast shamed and vanquished those
Who dared to be thy foes ;
Thou, free from every blame
That on thy loved name
Was hung by error pale,
Thou, wilt not, canst not, fail
To do the one great good
Obscured, misunderstood,

Perverted into wrong,
Made powerful and strong ;
More strength hast thou than they,
Thine is the holier way.
O proud and conquering race
Boasting of your disgrace,
Daring to thrust the dart
Into your mother's heart ;
Were all your life-blood tears
Shed for the wrongs of years,
Ye could not wash the stain
That on your hands remain ;
Were your tears turned to blood,
And like the river's flood
Poured out upon the sod
In penitence to God, —
Were you each hour and day
To watch and weep and pray,
Still Justice would not stay
Her hand, without avail
Where prayers and tears, the wail
Of slaughtered races, fills
The ear of Peace, and thrills
The lovely land with woe.
Thus have you wronged her so :
Though you build temples vast,
And all your treasures cast
In Charity's sweet name,
Yet will you bear this blame ;
Though sacred spires arise
To pierce the bending skies,
And voices everywhere

Join in the hymn and prayer,
No respite can you gain
Till love your hands restrain ;
Each deed brings recompense,
Of pain or joy intense ;
And 'twixt you and the law
Of God, no feeble flaw,
Or flimsy woof of creed,
Can span your fearful deed, —
Your cross and Calvary
Must your repentance be.
O Lady without stain,
Patient mid all thy pain,
Loveliest of all lands,
Uplift in thy white hands, —
Those hands tender and dear, —
These who are gathered here.
They touch thy garments' hem,
For thou hast need of them ;
They will bind up thy feet
For those paths dear and sweet
That they were wont to press
In thy loved wilderness.
'Tis nature speaks to thee,
Bidding thee dare, and be
All that thy spirit dreams ;
To flash the many beams
That o'er thee are unfurled
In joy upon the world.

XVI.

MOKETAVATA.

I.

A sound of war is on the western wind ;
The sun, with fiery flame, sweeps down the sky ;
Athwart his breast the crimson shadows fly
Of fearless forms no fetters e'er can bind.

II.

The eagle plunges from his mountain nest,
And screaming, soars above the distant plain,
Plucking his plumes without a pang of pain,
'Though stained, with blood from his own beating
breast.

III.

The hunter seeks the heated herd no more, —
The war-bird's pinions deck his dauntless head ;
The antelope with fleetest feet has fled
From woodland copse and streams' enticing shore.

IV.

The moving purpose of a mighty mind,
Resistless as swift death, a race now claims,
Wresting its weapons from their wonted aims,
Leaving pale fear and famine far behind.

V.

Moke-ta-va-ta, thy form appears again,
Thy spirit to its hunting-grounds hath risen ;
Thy body, bursting from its wintry prison,
Blossoms in blood-red flowers on the plain.

VI.

Thy voice makes eloquent the vital air,
Thy splendid image fills the day's clear eye ;
Thy people, hearing, seeing, swiftly fly,
Like war-birds, flocking, thronging, everywhere.

VII.

In thy sad fate their own is prophesied :
They strike to cleave in twain the burning band
Fastened upon them by a reckless hand,
Inclosing, crushing, till they all had died.

VIII.

The edict under which thou hast been slain
Hath been the nation's crime, latest and first,
By which our eldest brother was accursed ;
Yet we, unblushing, bear the brand of Cain.

IX.

What crimes were thine ; of what dread deeds accused ;
Wert thou a foe to freedom or thy kind ?
Spoke thou with double tongue or faithless mind,
That thus thou wert betrayed, reviled, abused ?

X.

No ! From great Nature's paths thou freely came,
Leading thy people to the nation's feet ;
And, when the two in conflict e'er did meet,
Thine was the honor, — ours the sin and shame.

XI.

Thy words were wisdom's essence, and were spoke
With guileless spirit and with single tongue ;
No falsehood's venom'd arrows 'neath them clung,
No trust was e'er betrayed, no promise broke.

XII.

The stranger sought thy *tépa* not in vain ;
Thou gavest him clothing, rest, and food, and fire,
Whate'er could fill his heart or mind desire,
E'en though the giving brought thy bosom pain.

XIII.

Nature revealed in thee her perfect art ;
Thy truth and valor all might emulate,
Thy potent power true homage to create,
Thy magnanimity of mind and heart.

XIV.

Even thy foes could win thee by their faith ;
Between them and the vengeance of thy kin
'Thou oft hast stood, though theirs the *dámned* sin
Of thy betrayal, — thine the martyr's death.

XV.

Thrice camest thou with offerings of love,
Pledging thy people with the pipe of peace,
That nor thy warriors, nor thy increase
Against the Government in war would move.

XVI.

Once, when the nation's banner o'er thee waved,
Thy village rested 'neath its promised care ;
The dastard coward struck thee unaware, —
Only by courage were thy people saved.

XVII.

Thy brother's blood beneath thine eye did flow,
The fire-arrows had stung thy faithful wife,
Yet thou didst fly to save the stranger's life :
“ I think you spies ; I do not know it, — go ! ”

XVIII.

Again the blundering hand of power destroyed
Thy stock and substance, and thy tepas burned ;
The tardy recompense thy spirit spurned, —
Remembrance of a wrong thou wouldst avoid.

XIX.

When thy young men the war-bird's plumes would
wear,
To vindicate thy right, avenge thy wrong,
Thy voice uplifted this persuasion strong :
“ The antelope can never fight the bear.”

XX.

And when the battle-cry was well begun,
And all thy influence for peace was past,
From thy proud form the chieftain's robes were cast,
And thou didst sadly seek the setting sun,

XXI.

Followed by her whose faithful willing feet
Companioned all thy weary wanderings ;
Camping, with thy small band, near the clear springs
From which the antelope doth drink the life-tide
sweet.

XXII.

Ah ! then the latest and the foulest wrong
Came upon thee without a warning word ;
Thee and thine stricken, like a hunted herd,
By that false power which makes the mighty strong ;

XXIII.

And thou wert slain. Whoever dared to trace
His name upon the order for thy death,
Will wear the sting until his latest breath
And bind the curse of Cain upon his race.

XXIV.

Six times the waning, weary moon hath turned
Her forehead from the heart-sick earth away,
Pining because of Justice's long delay,
Since thou, Voishta, hath, a captive, yearned

XXV.

For some avenging hand, some voice from Heaven,
To strike with serpent-sting this nation strong,
That dares decide to whom life doth belong ; —
She of the twelve wounds waits. Thou, Jesus, had but
seven.

XXVI.

'Twas ever thus ; an hundred winters' snows
And golden harvest-moons have poured their flood
Of wine and corn upon a people good,
And yet the life-blood of a nation flows

XXVII.

To slay the eldest children of a race
Nearest and dearest to Columbia's breast,
Because their feet her virgin soil have pressed,
And now their blood and tears stain her loved face.

XXVIII.

With eager hearts and unreluctant feet,
We turn from our fond mother's breast away,
We scorch our brows with brands of blazing day,
Then sigh in vain for her dear life-blood sweet.

XXIX.

Civilization with its burning power,
Slays her fair image with its fearful glaive ;
Then toiling we become its ready slave,
And vainly pine for respite one brief hour.

XXX.

This was a race of kings, as strong and true
As Roman citizen, or Spartan brave ;
Theirs was the pride, and theirs the heart to save,
Keeping great Nature's lessons full in view.

XXXI.

Moke-ta-va-ta, thy wrongs shall be redressed ;
Thy viewless form fills all the vernal air ;
Nor earth's fair bosom, nor the spring more fair,
Can stay the footsteps of a race oppressed.

XXXII.

Their name is legion, and from mountain slope
And distant plain their fearless forms appear,
All conquering, and all potent, without fear
They come with our proud nation now to cope.

XXXIII.

And if the rivers shall run red with blood,
And if the plain be strewn with mangled forms,
And cities burned amid the battles' storms,
Ours is the blame, not thine, thou great and good.

XXXIV.

Thy name shall live a watchword for all time, —
A herald and a beacon-light to all
On whom the tyrant and the despot fall,
Making thy death a heritage sublime.

XXXV.

If of this noble line thou wert the last,
And stood on the extremest ocean verge,
Thy eloquence would all thy people urge,
And in one deadly conflict they would cast

XXXVI.

Their gauntlet in our shameful, flaming face,
And then, without a thought of praise or blame,
Would perish to avenge thy noble name,
And prove that thou wert of a kingly race.

XXXVII.

A sound of war is on the western wind ;
The sun, with fiery flame, sweeps down the sky ;
Athwart his breast the crimson shadows fly
Of fearless forms no fetters e'er can bind.

XXXVIII.

Down through the golden gateway they have trod ;
The mighty scions of a nation come
In sweeping circles from their shining home,
With weapons from the battle-plains of God.

INTERLUDE.

I.

Strength !

From the king of day,
The sun, whose smile is life,
Whose frown is darkness, death ;
Who lighteth up the earth,
The earth, his chosen bride ;
Who guides his sister pale,
The moon, through the dark night ;
Who looks upon his bride,
And the day dawn appears ;
Who pities the pale moon,
And then the night comes on ;
Who kisses the fair earth,
And the spring-time is here,
Bringing her babes, the flowers ;
Who turns his face away,
And the Night's brother comes, —
Stern Winter, pale as death.
White are his snowy locks,
Strong are his chains of ice ;
He fastens them on all
The rivulets and streams ;
He shakes his fleecy hair,
And feathered snow-flakes fly ;
But the sun laughs again,
And Winter flies away.

II.

Strength !

From our Mother Earth,
Whose living pulses beat
With life-tides deep and strong ;
Whose warm maternal breast
Holds nourishment for all ;
Whose heart is ever true
To those who cling to her,
Even to those who stray
From her encircling arms :
She fain would follow them
With fair and snowy feet,
And fold, all silently,
Their sorrows to her breast, —
Great Mother of all things
Whose heart pulsates in time
To the high thoughts of God.

III.

Strength !

From the rocks and caves
Where ocean waves and winds,
Restless, forever beat
Around the ages' feet ;
From Mountains and broad Plains,
Valleys and smiling Hills,
Forests of living green.
Fortitude from the Pines,
From Cedar endless Love ;

The Spruce, Balsam, and Fir,
Give each their healing breath ;
Courage from the proud Oak,
And from the Elm true Grace ;
The Maple giveth Thought
And mental Nourishment :
From every shrub and tree,
Yielding invisible
And soothing balm to all.

IV.

Strength !
From the metals, ores :
From Iron, Silver, Gold,
The beds of Copper, Coal ;
From minerals and salts,
All veins of useful things
Treasured and garnered up
For centuries to come ;
From rare and sparkling gems
The Earth has crystallized,
And hidden, stored away
In caverns dark and lone,
Or tossed on burning sands ;
From the white diamond's light
The clear white light of Truth,
Faith from the Emerald,
And from the Ruby Love ;
The Sapphire bringeth Hope,
The Topaz yieldeth Fame ;
From Turquoise cometh Rest,

And from the Amber, Thought, —
Each hath its own delight, —
And from the Crystal springs
Pure Wisdom and clear Light.
From healing streams whose source
Is the high mountain brow,
By cloud and mist distilled,
Waters endowed with life
The ages have held fast
And garnered up for man.
O, healing sparkling springs,
O, limpid diamond drops,
O, waters without stain,
To you the nations come
And wash, and are made clean.

v.

Strength !
From the herbs and flowers
Blossoming everywhere ;
From fruits and golden grains,
Holding within their hearts
All nourishment and health,
Poisons and antidotes,
Sweets for the senses fine,
Loveliness for the eyes,
Healing for every pain ;
From lips of fragrance, fed
By gods and spirits fair ;
Flowers, all eloquent,
The living messengers
Of life and lovely death, —

Death which is but a change,
Awakening from sleep,
As from the prisoned germ
The bursting bud appears,
And then cometh the flower,
And afterward the fruit.

VI.

Strength !
From the wingéd throng,
The birds : from eagles wings,
With their surpassing power
Mounting far out of sight,
Diving into the deeps,
Gathering food below,
Building their nests on high,
Teaching their young to fly ;
Pushing them forth alone,
To try their unfledged wings,
But diving ever down
To catch them if they fall —
So is the spirit thrust
Out from the Parent nest,
But in the awful dark
Of earth it is upheld ;
Knows the kind One is there,
For the Great Father's love
Extendeth everywhere.
From birds that are not strong
But beautiful of wing,
Like odorless, gay flowers,
Most dazzling to the eye,

But touching not the soul
Because they have no song ;
From birds who hide away,
Shun all the glare and light,
But whose triumphant song
Is heard far out of sight, —
Like souls risen they sing,
The vibrant air is stirred
And thrilled with their delight ;
From the loved nightingale,
Peerless, yet sad and lone,
Whose song seems but a dream
Of some remembered joy, —
As souls immured in clay
Some reminiscence find
Of a beloved home ;
From skylarks soaring far,
And singing as they soar
They cleave a higher air,
We hear but cannot see :
Our souls go after them,
As we follow the loved
Who are caught up to heaven.

VII.

Strength !
From the lofty souls
Who tread the paths of space,
Whose lives were made complete
By all great nature gave ;
Who stand arrayed in light,
The light of their own thoughts,

As worlds and suns are clothed
In brightness all their own ;
Souls who have braved and dared
All things for Truth and Love
And Wisdom's precious sake, —
Who from the splendid height,
Where they like suns have risen,
Shine out, the guiding stars,
To light us o'er the wide
And weary waste of years ;
From struggling, toiling souls
Battling with strife and wrong ;
From darkened, clouded souls
Who have not found the day,
Waiting, as the germ waits
Beneath the silent sod,
Until the sun's bright rays
Wins it to life and love ;
From souls made glad and strong
By conquests they have gained
O'er selfishness and pride,
Over ambition's glare ;
From martyrs' souls who gave
Their lives for the world's sake,
(Or rather lived their Truths
And thus were crucified).

VIII.

Strength !

From Poets who drank
Nectar by gods distilled,
And tasted of the fruits

From proud Olympus' height, —
Who breathed their songs and died, —
Who live in every form
Of loveliness on earth
And in each dream of heaven ;
From all the master minds
Who filled their chosen place,
And left a perfect gift
To earth, a monument
On which these words are traced, —
Thus much the world has gained.
Because that great soul came.”
From souls complete, entire
As the full rounded years,
To whom at last life gave
Its highest heights of Love,
Its deepest depths of Truth,
Leaving them nought to fear
And nought to gain on earth ;
Whose very pressure gave
A harmony and peace,
And made the vibrant air
Grow glad with new delight ;
And who, having thus lived,
Made everything more fair,
And who, passing away,
Were mourned not as the dead,
But were beheld, instead,
Each like a sun or star,
In constellations bright
Where the immortals are.

HESPERIA.
BENEDICTION.



Dedicated to

ULYSSES S. GRANT,

THE EARNEST PATRIOT, THE FAITHFUL SERVANT OF THE PEOPLE,
THE TRUE FRIEND OF THE OPPRESSED AND LONG ABUSED
INDIAN, THE CITIZEN SOLDIER WHO PREFERS TO
EXCHANGE THE LAURELS OF WAR FOR
THE OLIVE BRANCH OF PEACE.



I.

RETRIBUTION.

RED.

OUT of the breast of Llamia there came
Two fierce and fiery tongues of forked flame :

Red with the biting bitter blood of wars,
Red with the burning breath of blazing Mars ;

Twin lava streams of liquid Ætna fire,
Lurid with lightnings of unquenched desire ;

Red with the slime of serpents, and the breath
Of venom'd scorpions whose sting is death ;

Red with the stain of deadly night-shade bloom,
And fruits of scarlet sin growing in gloom ;

Red-ripe and poisonous berries clinging, rank,
To mouldering walls and ruins gray and dank ;

Red with the waves of that deep, sobbing sea,
Washing the shores of human agony ;—

Fed by fountains of shame and drops of sin,
The red of serpent streams all flowing in ;

Red with the scourge-wounds of the toiling slaves,
Their warm blood bursting beneath gyves and glaives ;

Red stripes of silken webs of infamy,
The warp and woof of horrid misery ;

The red of wounded birds, bleeding and bare,
Beating their breasts against the blackened air ;

The red of wine, the awful nourishment
Of Crime and Poverty, twin brothers sent

From Hades' dark and slimy serpent bed,
To win the souls of mortals to the dead. —

Red with the million-forked tongues of war,
Lapping hot blood and hissing fire afar.

One serpent stream, coil upon coil was wound
Hesperia's sleeping, lovely form around,

Staining the milky whiteness of her breast ;
Closer and closer to her body pressed,

Fastening its adder tongue above her heart,
Whence all those liquid streams of beauty start.

Then Llamia fixed on her that dread eye,
Waiting to see the lovely maiden die ;

The pale lips paler grew, fainter the breath,
So feeble now it seemed a dream of death,

When lo! the serpent swift as thought unwound
Writhing upon the red and blood-stained ground ;

Sucking a stream of her heart's purity,
Its poisoned venom'd body then must die.

The other in a reddening river spread
Far o'er the plain in many a bloody bed,

Blackening the vernal fields with slime and blood,
Staining the crystal streams with its foul flood,

Its undulating, swelling form out-rolled
Until it seemed the whole world to enfold ;

Then when she looked to see her foul work done
She saw its fangs fasten upon her son.

Long fought they in bitter and deadly strife,
Combating each for the bare boon of life, —

Such life as that which feeds on craven care
And asks no higher boon than dread despair ;

Red with her sins, drunk with the wine of blood,
Stung by her venom, drowned in horror's flood,

Shrouded and wrapped in folds of fiery flame,
Shrieking and cursing every sacred name,

Her dark son and the serpent died in gore,
The ghosts of their foul wrongs rushing before.

Out of the white of day and the moon's light
Beyond all sounds of rapture and delight,

As liquid lightnings hissing in a spasm
Sink down into a blackened earthquake chasm,

As sultry summer suns pass out of sight
Red shrouded leaving the cool white of night,

As Wars and Pestilence and Famine die,
When the whole brood of Passion Vultures fly,

Down, down 'mid all her legions of despair
Leaving the white of peace upon the air,

Llania, red with self-consuming flame,
Sank into Lethe's waters whence she came.

II.

COMPENSATION.

WHITE.

On a white mountain top a Temple white
All intricately intertraced with light ;

White with the ancient Sea-foam, crystallized,
With cloud-mist Alabaster, marbleized ;

White with snowy Blossoms and bloom of Snow,
The white above meeting the white below ;

White Pillars corrugated with white Light,
And Capitals of splendid dazzling height ;

The white of Pearl all wondrously enwrought
With iridescent hues from Sea-spray caught ;

White Lilies-of-the-valley sweetly hung,
Like waxen bells by Fauns and Fairies rung ;

Wild white Clematis, starry Lemon flowers,
Jasmine from far-off blooming tropic bowers ;

White languid Lilies, pearly passion pale,
Whose incense make the senses fade and fail ;

White images of every perfect form of Art
That are of Poesy and Bliss a part,

All crownéd by a white, clear, shining Cone,
Like a white lily cup swung from its home,

With pointed petals piercing the white air,
And golden stamens, like star-beams swung there ;

White wingéd Birds cleaving the white clear space ;
White Swans, floating on each white cloud-mere's face ;

Doves, white as peace and full of dear delight ;
White Eagles, soaring ever to the light ;

White Virgins breathing vespers low and sweet,
Walking the shining paths with snowy feet ;

White with the Soul of purity and Prayer,
Filling and thrilling all the charmed air ;

White with the Moon's light and the light of Day,
And snowy Silence holding solemn sway ;

With Anthems all unsung but gathered there
On snow white wings of Song, felt everywhere ;

The white of Purity and Truth and Love,
Imaged in the white air and dome above ;

Fair images of Youth and whitest Morning,
The white cloud-crowned mountain brow adorning ;

White souls of Martyrs, Saints, and Seraphim,
Of Infants, Unborn Babes, and Cherubim,

Of Angels and Archangels, disenthralled
From every chain of earth, all unappalled, —

Spirits of Magdalens made white and free
Through the veiled image of Divinity.

Within the inmost of this temple white
A rare pavilion formed of woven light,

Pillared with dream-of-clouds and roofed above
With snowy flowers like spirits of love ;

The fleecy clouds their diamond dew distilled,
And all the shining, pebbled basin filled ;

Upon a bed of water-lilies lay
A Maiden white as light and pure as day,

Drinking her fill of sweet and liquid rest,
Pure as the milk from fondest mother's breast —

White rest for a white soul so tenderly
Attuned to light and love and harmony ;

Soft zephyrs fanned her with their mist-like wings,
And breezes wooed her in their wanderings ;

Then odors, star-shaped, or like moonbeams fair,
Floated above her, filling her light hair ;

Then came the Spirit of each lovely Flower,
Bearing sweet music with its matchless power,

Till every shade of unremembered pain
Vanished, nor left the slightest sting or stain.

Around her snowy limbs the maiden clouds
Wove, wondrously, white robes, no ghostly shrouds ;

But fleecy, gauze-like, floating draperies,
Like drifted snow or sea-foam fantasies ;

The wingéd spirit of white Bridal Blooms
Upon her bosom breathed their sweet perfumes,

And over all a veil of woven mist,
Like vision vapors by dream moonbeams kissed,

Enfolded and enhanced her loveliness,
While evermore around her soul did press

Swift-footed Dreams, in their wild wanderings,
Uplifting her pure soul, as one who sings

Wafts the thoughts heavenward ; holy Desires
And Adorations woke their vestal fires ;

White Aspirations on the wings of Prayer
Hovered, attendant Angels everywhere.

Over the snowy surface of her soul
A vision swept with grand, sublime control,

Deep, clear, and full of wondrous mysteries,
All Reminiscence and all Prophecies,

Moving her spirit as the waters move,
Waking her soul to rapture, life, and love :

O white of wedded souls, O snowy sphere
Of Purity and Truth, whose atmosphere

Clothes and pervades each glowing counterpart —
Of life and Heaven and Deity the heart, —

As the sun's rays waken the sleeping flower
To consciousness of beauty, bloom, and power ;

As snowy wedded Swans salute the Morn
The Bride of day, whom all the clouds adorn ;

As Souls are upward drawn from the cold clay
To bathe in the white light of Endless Day,

She rose from her chaste lily-bed of rest,
Close to a beating heart was fondly pressed,

And placed forever by a loved one's side,
His Lily white, his own Eternal Bride ;

The soul of rapture and all pure delight,
The white of Love, the image of God white.

III.

PROPHECY.

BLUE.

Out of a heaven of blue a spirit sped,
Swift as a thought by taunting terrors fed,
Down, down into the deepest ocean bed ;

A ling'ring line of light along the sky
Turned all to darkness as it down did hie,
And sad space shuddered with a sullen sigh.

Then thought I, "'Tis a star suddenly stung
By fierce rebellion, as it blindly swung,
And out of heaven forever it is flung ;

Or 'tis a soul haunted with horrid fears,
The deeds of shame and thoughts of earthly years,
And seeks to drown them in an ocean's tears."

The waters mockingly engulfed its light,
The darkness of the waves hid it from sight,
And darker round me closed the dreary night.

An interval of struggles, doubts, and fears,
Measured alone by tortures, pains, and tears
(For sorrow knows nor days, nor months, nor years),

Out of the depths uprolled a single crest
Higher and prouder, moving all the rest,
Bearing a burden on its beating breast ;

Then, at the breath of some silent command,
Quickly there burst from girðling water's band,
Unfolding like a star in God's right hand,

A flower pure, — its shining petals spread
In azure circles o'er its emerald bed,
Like music or pure thoughts above the dead.

Blue with the distance and the blue of day,
Golden with all the sun's refulgent ray,
This lovely blossom tremulously lay, —

This nurs'ling of the wind and wave and storm,
With no enfolding earth to keep it warm,
Wove wondrous garments for its lovely form :

Its blue and golden chalice held such rare,
Melodious odors, that the morning air
And wild, wide waters grew surpassing fair.

This blossom-land its loveliness outspread
Far, far and wide, o'er the deep waters' bed,
Thrilling the rocky shores of nations dead.

The world forgot its sordid crimes and cares,
Its tortures and blind fears, its deadly snares,
And wonderingly worshipped unawares.

The Ages yielded all their hopes and fears,
Pale Errors and the cruel Wrongs of years,
And kneeling on her shores, bathed them in tears.

Sad Sorrow ceased to moan, and lo ! her eyes,
Long used to grief, held now a sweet surprise,
Changing their drops to dew's of Paradise.

The nations, lifted by a living soul,
Felt life and rapture o'er them swiftly roll,
Bowing in homage to their blest control.

Tyrants forgot their crowns, their sceptres lay
Silent and broken 'neath the light of day,
And one supreme spirit o'er them held sway.

Disease and Pestilence and Famine fled
With gory War into oblivion's bed,
And of all things these only were the dead,—

For that named Death was but a boon of bliss
Luring the spirit, as a mother's kiss
Wins her sweet babe to brighter scenes than this.

Fetters were broken, captives saw the day,
Prisons no more, with damp walls bare and gray,
Filled the sad earth with horror and dismay.

All things were vocal with the voice of love,
All sounds, all silence, in her breath did move,
And blue of earth met the deep blue above.

The very air was liquid, and the sun
Grew pale beside the glory of the One
Complete, Eternal Spirit that there shone.

Here every perfect form of perfect art,
Holding supreme control over the heart,
Was made of this fair land a living part.

Here Angelo's, Correggio's rare dreams,
Through which Truth ever flashed its many beams,
Became the living soul of days rare gleams ;

And Saints, made lovely by their deep distress,
O'er thorny pathways to this shore did press,
Finding a spirit like their loveliness.

Here music without sound, the soul of Song,
Or Poesy unchained to words, the throng
Of harmonies seemed ever borne along.

Each Aspiration, every pure Desire,
The star of Hope, and Love's eternal fire,
Found here fit recompense for Sorrow's pyre.

Perfect, the waters and the winds did move,
Harmonious to this azure pinioned Dove,
And all the world was melted into love.

Perfect Twin Spirits interblent,
All loveliness its subtle forces lent,
And Heaven its highest benedictions sent.

This twain made One by Hope and Love sublime,
Not lost, only obscured for a brief time,
Restored, erewhile the marriage bell shall chime.

Suspended from the sky a sapphire bell
With golden stamen tongues and softest swell
Of melody this pure delight shall tell:—

Above a mountain blue a sapphire dome
Swung like an azure lily from its home,

Twin sister of that maiden mountain white,—
Pillared in the same clouds and crowned with light—

A vault of blue like the deep vault above,
Fitting abode for Liberty and Love ;

Sapphire, the blue of heaven pierced with gems, —
Stars, set in manifold bright diadems ;

Turquoise, the white of blue, sea dream of heaven,
Fair glimpse of love to the dark waters given ;

Violets from the golden cleft of sky,
Wandering waifs of heaven flitting by,

Chiming their crystalline and starry knells
In sweet remembrance of their home, Blue-bells ;

Blue of Forget-me-nots, a prophecy,
A faith in love's unfading memory ;

The blue of the deep sea, its green, its gray,
Floating in a white spirit mist away ;

Ocean, blue other sky, beneath the stars,
Pierced by their light, crossed by their golden bars ;

The blue of day, the radiant pure air,
Filled, thrilled, and moved by a deep passion rare ;

The blue of eyes, made of the sky and sea,
And gray mist veils hiding eternity, —

Down drooping eyes, like lowly violet,
Love laden, and with shining dew pearls wet ;

Uplooking, filled with Faith's mild holy light,
Blue like the sky, and gemmed with stars like night ;

Truth, blue as Ether and as undefiled,
Beautiful as fair space, or as a child ;

Imagination, on thine azure wings
How the soul cleaves the air and sings :

The blue of Reminiscence, Prophecy,
The glorious past and all that is to be.

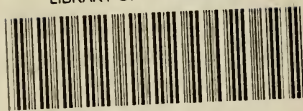
Wisdom the mirror of the soul and shield
Of knowledge, all thy golden glories yield ;

The blue of the empyrean boundless space,
With blue of distance, hiding God's white face ;

Blue for the bed of stars, thy palace dome,
Blue other side of God's white shining home.



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